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A FIRST FAMILY OF TASAJARA.

BY BRET HARTE.

CHAPTER VI.

THE trade wind, that blowing directly from the Golden Gate seemed to concentrate its full force upon the western slope of Russian Hill, might have dismayed any climber less hopeful and sanguine than that most imaginative of newspaper reporters and most youthful of husbands, John Milton Harcourt. But for all that it was an honest wind and its dry, practical energy and salt-pervading breath only seemed to sting him to greater and more enthusiastic exertions, until, quite at the summit of the hill and last of a straggling line of little cottages half submerged in drifting sand, he stood upon his own humble porch.

"I was thinking, coming up the hill, Loo," he said, bursting into the sitting-room, pantingly, "of writing something about the future of the hill! How it will look fifty years from now! —all terraced with houses and gardens! —and right up here a kind of Acropolis, don't you know. I had quite a picture of it in my mind just now."

A plainly-dressed young woman with a pretty face, that, however, looked as if it had been prematurely sapped of colour and vitality, here laid aside some white sewing she had in her lap, and said:

"But you did that once before, Milty, and you know the *Herald* wouldn't take it because they said it was a free notice of Mr. Boorem's building lots, and he didn't advertise in the *Herald*. I always told you that you ought to have seen Boorem first."

The young fellow blinked his eyes with a momentary arrest of that buoyant hopefulness which was their peculiar characteristic, but nevertheless replied with undaunted cheerfulness, "I forgot. Anyhow, it's all the same, for I worked it into that 'Sunday Walk.' And it's just as easy to write it the other way, you see—looking back—*down the hill*, you know. Something about the old Padres toiling through the sand just before the Angelus; or as far back as Sir Francis Drake's time, and have a runaway boat's crew coming ashore to look for gold that the Mexicans had talked of. Lord! that's easy enough! I tell you what, Loo, it's worth living up here just for the inspiration." Even while boyishly exhaling this enthusiasm he was also divesting himself of certain bundles whose contents seemed to imply that he had brought his dinner with him—the youthful Mrs. Harcourt setting the table in a perfunctory, listless way that contrasted oddly with her husband's cheerful energy.

"You haven't heard of any regular situation yet?" she asked abstractedly.

"No—not exactly," he replied. "But [buoyantly] it's a great deal better for me not to take anything in a hurry and tie myself to any particular line. Now, I'm quite free."

"And I suppose you haven't seen that Mr. Fletcher again?" she continued.

"No. He only wanted to know

something about me. That's the way with them all, Loo. Whenever I apply for work anywhere it's always: 'So you're Dan'l Harcourt's son, eh? Quarrelled with the old man? Bad job; better make it up! You'll make more stickin' to him. He's worth millions!' Everybody seems to think everything of *him*, as if *I* had no individuality beyond that. I've a good mind to change my name."

"And pray what would mine be then?"

There was so much irritation in her voice that he drew nearer her and gently put his arm around her waist. "Why, whatever mine was, darling," he said with a tender smile. "You didn't fall in love with any particular name, did you, Loo?"

"No, but I married a particular one," she said quickly.

His eyelids quivered again, as if he was avoiding some unpleasantly staring suggestion, and she stopped.

"You know what I mean, dear," she said, with a quick little laugh. "Just because your father's an old crosspatch, *you* haven't lost your rights to his name and property. And those people who say you ought to make it up, perhaps know what's for the best."

"But you remember what he said of you, Loo?" said the young man with a flashing eye. "Do you think I can ever forget that?"

"But you *do* forget it, dear; you forget it when you go in town among fresh faces and people; when you are looking for work. You forget it when you're at work writing your copy—for I've seen you smile as you wrote. You forget it climbing up the dreadful sand, for you were thinking just now of what happened years ago, or is to happen years to come. And I want to forget it too, Milty. I don't want to sit here all day, thinking of it, with the wind driving the sand against the window, and nothing to look at but those white tombs in Lone Mountain cemetery, and those white caps that might be gravestones too, and not a soul to talk to or even see pass by until I feel as if I were dead and buried also. If you were me—you—you—you couldn't help crying too!"

Indeed, he was very near it now. For as he caught her in his arms, suddenly seeing with a lover's sympathy and the poet's swifter imagination all that she had seen and even more, he was aghast at the vision conjured. In her delicate health and loneliness how dreadful must have been these monotonous days, and this glittering, cruel sea! What a selfish brute he was! Yet as he stood there holding her, silently and rhythmically marking his tenderness and remorseful feelings by rocking her from side to side like a languid metronome, she quietly disengaged her wet lashes from his shoulder and said in quite another tone:

"So they were all at Tasajara last week?"

"Who, dear?"

"Your father and sisters."

"Yes," said John Milton, hesitatingly.

"And they've taken back your sister after her divorce?"

The staring obtrusiveness of this fact apparently made her husband's bright sympathetic eye blink as before.

"And if you were to divorce me, *you* would be taken back too," she added quickly, suddenly withdrawing herself with a pettish movement and walking to the window.

But he followed. "Don't talk in that way, Loo! Don't look in that way, dear!" he said, taking her hand gently, yet not without a sense of some inconsistency in her conduct that jarred upon his own simple directness. "You know that nothing can part us now. I was wrong to let my little girl worry herself all alone here, but I—I—thought it was all so—so bright and free out on this hill—looking far away beyond the Golden Gate—as far as Cathay, you know, and such a change from those dismal flats of Tasajara—and that awful stretch of *tules*. But it's all right now. And now that I know how you feel, we'll go elsewhere."

She did not reply. Perhaps she found it difficult to keep up her injured attitude in the face of her husband's gentleness. Perhaps her attention had been attracted by the unusual spectacle of a stranger, who had just mounted the hill and was now slowly passing along the line of cottages with a hesitating air of inquiry. "He may be looking for this house—for you," she said in an entirely new tone of interest. "Run out and see. It may be some one who wants——"

"An article," said Milton cheerfully. "By Jove! he *is* coming here."

The stranger was indeed approaching the little cottage, and with apparently some confidence. He was a well-dressed, well-made man, whose age looked uncertain from the contrast between his heavy, brown moustache and his hair, that, curling under the brim of his hat, was almost white in colour. The young man started, and said, hurriedly: "I really believe it is Fletcher—they say his hair turned white from the Panama fever."

It was indeed Mr. Fletcher who entered and introduced himself. A gentle reserved man, with something of that colourlessness of premature age in his speech which was observable in his hair. He had heard of Mr. Harcourt from a friend who had recommended him highly. As Mr. Harcourt had probably been told, he, the speaker, was about to embark some capital in a first-class newspaper in San Francisco, and should select the staff himself. He wanted to secure only first-rate talent—but above all, youthfulness, directness, and originality. The *Clarion*, for that was to be its name, was to have nothing "old fogey" about it. No. It was distinctly to be the organ of Young California! This and much more from the grave lips of the elderly young man, whose speech seemed to be divided between the pretty, but equally faded, young wife, and the one personification of invincible youth present—her husband.

"But I fear I have interrupted your household duties," he said pleasantly. "You were preparing dinner. Pray go on. And let me help you—I'm not a bad cook—and you can give me my reward by letting me share it with you, for the climb up here has sharpened my appetite. We can talk as we go on."

It was in vain to protest; there was something paternal as well as practical in the *camaraderie* of this actual capitalist and possible Mæcenas and patron as he quietly hung up his hat and overcoat, and helped to set the table with a practised hand. Nor, as he suggested, did the conversation falter, and before they had taken their seats at the frugal board he had already engaged John Milton Harcourt as assistant editor of the *Clarion* at a salary that seemed princely to this son of a millionaire! The young wife meantime had taken active part in the discussion; whether it was vaguely understood that the possession of practical and imaginative faculties precluded any capacity for business, or whether it was owing to the apparent superior maturity of Mrs. Harcourt and the stranger, it was certain that *they* arranged the practical details of the engagement, and that the youthful husband sat silent, merely offering his always hopeful and sanguine consent.

"You'll take a house nearer to town, I suppose?" continued Mr. Fletcher to the lady, "though you've a charming view here. I suppose it was quite a change from Tasajara and your father-in-law's house? I dare say he had as fine a place there—on his own homestead—as he has here?"

Young Harcourt dropped his sensitive eyelids again. It seemed hard that he could never get away from these allusions to his father! Perhaps it was only to that relationship that he was indebted for his visitor's kindness. In his simple honesty he could not bear the thought of such a misapprehension. "Perhaps, Mr. Fletcher, you do not know," he said, "that my father is not on terms with me, and that we neither expect anything nor could we ever take anything from him.

Could we, Loo?" He added the useless question partly because he saw that his wife's face betrayed little sympathy with him, and partly that Fletcher was looking at her curiously, as if for confirmation. But this was another of John Milton's trials as an imaginative reporter; nobody ever seemed to care for his practical opinions or facts!

"Mr. Fletcher is not interested in our little family differences, Milty," she said, looking at Mr. Fletcher, however, instead of him. "You're Daniel Harcourt's *son* whatever happens."

The cloud that had passed over the young man's face and eyes did not, however, escape Mr. Fletcher's attention, for he smiled, and added gaily, "And I hope my valued lieutenant in any case." Nevertheless John Milton was quite ready to avail himself of an inspiration to fetch some cigars for his guest from the bar of the Sea-View House on the slope of the hill beyond, and thereby avoid a fateful subject. Once in the fresh air again he promptly recovered his boyish spirits. The light flying scud had already effaced the first rising stars: the lower creeping sea-fog had already blotted out the western shore and sea; but below him to the east the glittering lights of the city seemed to start up with a new, mysterious, and dazzling brilliancy. It was the valley of diamonds that Sinbad saw lying almost at his feet! Perhaps somewhere there the light of his own fame and fortune was already beginning to twinkle!

He returned to his humble roof joyous and inspired. As he entered the hall he heard his wife's voice and his own name mentioned, followed by that awkward, meaningless silence on his entrance which so plainly indicated that either he had been the subject of conversation or that it was not for his ears. It was a dismal reminder of his boyhood at Sidon and Tasajara. But he was too full of hope and ambition to heed it to-night, and later, when Mr. Fletcher had taken his departure, his pent-up enthusiasm burst out before his youthful partner. Had she realized that their struggles were over now, that their future was secure? They need no longer fear ever being forced to take bounty from the family; they were independent of them all! He would make a name for himself that should be distinct from his father's, as he should make a fortune that would be theirs alone. The young wife smiled. "But all that need not prevent you, dear, from claiming your *rights* when the time comes."

"But if I scorn to make the claim or take a penny of his, Loo?"

"You say you scorn to take the money you think your father got by a mere trick—at the best—and didn't earn. And now you will be able to show you can live without it, and earn your own fortune. Well, dear, for that very reason why should you let your father and others enjoy and waste what is fairly your share? For it is *your* share whether it came to your father fairly or not; and if not it is still your duty, believing as you do, to claim it from him, that at least *you* may do with it what you choose. You might want to restore it—to—to—somebody."

The young man laughed. "But, my dear Loo! suppose that I were weak enough to claim it, do you think my father would give it up? He has the right, and no law could force him to yield to me more than he chooses."

"Not the law—but *you* could."

"I don't understand you," he said quickly.

"You could force him by simply telling him what you once told me."

John Milton drew back, and his hand dropped loosely from his wife's. The colour left his fresh young face; the light quivered for a moment and then became fixed and set in his eyes. For that moment he looked ten years her senior. "I was wrong ever to tell even you that, Loo," he said in a low voice. "You are wrong to ever remind me of it. Forget it from this

moment, as you value our love and want it to live and be remembered. And forget, Loo, as I do—and ever shall—that you ever suggested to me to use my secret in the way you did just now."

But here Mrs. Harcourt burst into tears, more touched by the alteration in her husband's manner, I fear, than by any contrition for wrongdoing. Of course if he wished to withdraw his confidences from her, just as he had almost confessed he wished to withdraw his *name*, she couldn't help it, but it was hard that when she sat there all day long trying to think what was best for them, she should be blamed! At which the quiet and forgiving John Milton smiled remorsefully and tried to comfort her. Nevertheless an occasional odd, indefinable chill seemed to creep across the feverish enthusiasm with which he was celebrating this day of fortune. And yet he neither knew nor suspected until long after that his foolish wife had that night half betrayed his secret to the stranger!

The next day he presented a note of introduction from Mr. Fletcher to the business manager of the *Clarion*, and the following morning was duly installed in office. He did not see his benefactor again; that single visit was left in the mystery and isolation of an angelic episode. It later appeared that other and larger interests in the San José valley claimed his patron's residence and attendance; only the capital and general purpose of the paper—to develope into a party organ in the interest of his possible senatorial aspirations in due season—was furnished by him. Grateful as John Milton felt towards him, he was relieved; it seemed probable that Mr. Fletcher *had* selected him on his individual merits, and not as the son of a millionaire.

He threw himself into his work with his old hopeful enthusiasm, and perhaps an originality of method that was part of his singular independence. Without the student's training or restraint,—for his two years' schooling at Tasajara during his parents' prosperity came too late to act as a discipline,—he was unfettered by any rules, and guided only by an unerring instinctive taste that came near being genius. He was a brilliant and original, if not always a profound and accurate, reporter. By degrees he became an accustomed interest to the readers of the *Clarion;* then an influence. Actors themselves in many a fierce drama, living lives of devotion, emotion, and picturesque incident, they had satisfied themselves with only the briefest and most practical daily record of their adventure, and even at first were dazed and startled to find that many of them had been heroes and some poets. The stealthy boyish reader of romantic chronicle at Sidon had learned by heart the chivalrous story of the emigration. The second column of the *Clarion* became famous even while the figure of its youthful writer, unknown and unrecognized, was still nightly climbing the sands of Russian Hill, and even looking down as before on the lights of the growing city, without a thought that he had added to that glittering constellation.

Cheerful and contented with the exercise of work, he would have been happy but for the gradual haunting of another dread which presently began to drag him at earlier hours up the steep path to his little home; to halt him before the door with the quickened breath of an anxiety he would scarcely confess to himself, and sometimes hold him aimlessly a whole day beneath his roof. For the pretty, but delicate, Mrs. Harcourt, like others of her class, had added a weak and ineffective maternity to their other conjugal trials, and one early dawn a baby was born that lingered with them scarcely longer than the morning mist and exhaled with the rising sun. The young wife regained her strength slowly—so slowly that the youthful husband brought his work at times to the house to keep her company. And a singular change had come over her. She no longer talked of the past

nor of his family. As if the little life that had passed with that morning mist had represented some ascending expiatory sacrifice, it seemed to have brought them into closer communion.

Yet her weak condition made him conceal another trouble that had come upon him. It was in the third month of his employment on the *Clarion* that one afternoon, while correcting some proofs on his chief's desk, he came upon the following editorial paragraph :—

"The played-out cant of 'pioneer genius' and 'pioneer discovery' appears to have reached its climax in the attempt of some of our contemporaries to apply it to Dan Harcourt's new Tasajara Job before the Legislature. It is perfectly well known in Harcourt's own district that, far from being a pioneer and settler *himself*, he simply succeeded after a fashion to the genuine work of one Elijah Curtis, an actual pioneer and discoverer, years before, while Harcourt, we believe, was keeping a frontier doggery in Sidon, and dispensing 'tangle foot' and salt junk to the hayfooted Pike Countians of his precinct. This would make him as much of the 'pioneer discoverer' as the rattlesnake who first takes up board and lodgings and then possession in a prairie dog's burrow. And if the traveller's tale is true that the rattlesnake sometimes makes a meal of his landlord—the story told at Sidon may be equally credible that the original pioneer mysteriously disappeared about the time that Dan Harcourt came into the property. From which it would seem that Harcourt is not in a position for his friends to invite very deep scrutiny into his 'pioneer' achievements."

Stupefaction, a vague terror and rising anger rapidly succeeded each other in the young man's mind as he stood mechanically holding the paper in his hand. It was the writing of his chief editor, whose easy brutality he had sometimes even boyishly admired. Without stopping to consider their relative positions he sought him indignantly and laid the proof before him. The editor laughed. "But what's that to *you*? *You're* not on terms with the old man."

"But he is my father!" said John Milton hotly.

"Look here," said the editor good-naturedly, "I'd like to oblige you, but it isn't *business*, you know—and this *is*, you understand—*proprietor's business*, too! Of course I see it might stand in the way of your making up to the old man afterwards and coming in for a million. Well! you can tell him it's *me*. Say I *would* put it in. Say I'm nasty—and I *am*!"

"Then it must go in?" said John Milton with a white face.

"You bet."

"Then *I* must go out." And writing out his resignation, he laid it before his chief and left.

But he could not bear to tell this to his wife when he climbed the hill that night, and he invented some excuse for bringing his work home. The invalid never noticed any change in his usual buoyancy, and indeed I fear, when he was fairly installed with his writing materials at the foot of her bed, he had quite forgotten the episode. He was recalled to it by a faint sigh.

"What is it, dear?" he said, looking up.

"I like to see you writing, Milty. You always look so happy."

"Always so happy, dear?"

"Yes. You are happy, are you not?"

"Always." He got up and kissed her. Nevertheless, when he sat down to his work again, his face was turned a little more to the window.

Another serious incident—to be also kept from the invalid — shortly followed. The article in the *Clarion* had borne its fruit. The third day after his resignation a rival paper sharply retorted:—"The cowardly insinuations against the record of a justly honoured capitalist," said the *Pioneer*, "although quite in keeping with the brazen *Clarion*, might attract the attentions of the slandered party, if it were not known to his friends as well as himself

that it may be traced almost directly to a cast-off member of his own family, who, it seems, is reduced to haunting the back doors of certain blatant journals to dispose of his cheap wares. The slanderer is secure from public exposure in the superior decency of his relations, who refrain from airing their family linen upon editorial lines."

This was the journal to which John Milton had hopefully turned for work. When he read it there seemed but one thing for him to do—and he did it. Gentle and optimistic as was his nature, he had been brought up in a community where sincere directness of personal offence was followed by equally sincere directness of personal redress, and—he challenged the editor. The bearer of his cartel was one Jack Hamlin, I grieve to say a gambler by profession, but between whom and John Milton had sprung up an odd friendship of which the best that can be said is that it was to each equally and unselfishly unprofitable. The challenge was accepted, the preliminaries arranged. "I suppose," said Jack carelessly, "as the old man ought to do something for your wife in case of accident, you've made some sort of a will?"

"I've thought of that," said John Milton dubiously, "but I'm afraid it's of no use. You see—" he hesitated, "I'm not of age."

"May I ask how old you are, sonny?" said Jack with great gravity.

"I'm almost twenty," said John Milton colouring.

"It isn't exactly *vingt-et-un*, but I'd stand on it; if I were you I wouldn't draw to such a hand," said Jack coolly.

The young husband had arranged to be absent from his home that night, and early morning found him, with Jack, grave, but courageous, in a little hollow behind the Mission Hills. To them presently approached his antagonist jauntily accompanied by Colonel Starbottle, his second. They halted, but after the formal salutation were instantly joined by Jack Hamlin. For a few moments John Milton remained awkwardly alone—pending a conversation which even at that supreme moment he felt as being like the general attitude of his friends towards him, in its complete ignoring of himself. The next moment the three men stepped towards him. "We have come, sir," said Colonel Starbottle in his precisest speech but his jauntiest manner, "to offer you a full and ample apology—a personal apology—which only supplements that full public apology that my principal, sir, this gentleman," indicating the editor of the *Pioneer*, "has this morning made in the columns of his paper, as you will observe," producing a newspaper. "We have, sir," continued the Colonel loftily, "only within the last twelve hours become aware of the—er—*real* circumstances of the case. We would regret that the affair had gone so far already, if it had not given us, sir, the opportunity of testifying to your gallantry. We do so gladly; and if—er—er—a *few years later*, Mr. Harcourt, you should ever need—a friend in any matter of this kind, I am, sir, at your service." John Milton gazed half inquiringly, half uneasily at Jack.

"It's all right, Milt," he said *sotto voce*. "Shake hands all round and let's go to breakfast. And I rather think that editor wants to employ you *himself*."

It was true, for when that night he climbed eagerly the steep homeward hill he carried with him the written offer of an engagement on the *Pioneer*. As he entered the door his wife's nurse and companion met him with a serious face. There had been a strange and unexpected change in the patient's condition, and the doctor had already been there twice. As he put aside his coat and hat and entered her room it seemed to him that he had for ever put aside all else of essay and ambition beyond those four walls. And with the thought a great peace came upon him. It seemed good to him to live for her alone.

It was not for long. As each mo-

notonous day brought the morning mist and evening fog regularly to the little hill-top where his whole being was now centered, she seemed to grow daily weaker, and the little circle of her life narrowed day by day. One morning when the usual mist appeared to have been withheld and the sun had risen with a strange and cruel brightness; when the waves danced and sparkled on the bay below and light glanced from dazzling sails, and even the white tombs on Lone Mountain glittered keenly; when cheery voices hailing each other on the hillside came to him clearly but without sense or meaning; when earth, sky, and sea seemed quivering with life and motion, he opened the door of that one little house on which the only shadow seemed to have fallen, and went forth again into the world alone.

CHAPTER VII.

Mr. Daniel Harcourt's town mansion was also on an eminence, but it was that gentler acclivity of fashion known as Rincon Hill, and sunned itself on a southern slope of luxury. It had been described as "princely," and "fairy-like," by a grateful reporter; tourists and travellers had sung its praises in letters to their friends and in private reminiscences, for it had dispensed hospitality to most of the celebrities who had visited the coast. Nevertheless its charm was mainly due to the ruling taste of Miss Clementina Harcourt, who had astonished her father by her marvellous intuition of the nice requirements and elegant responsibilities of their position; and had thrown her mother into the pained perplexity of a matronly hen, who, among the ducks' eggs entrusted to her fostering care, had unwittingly hatched a graceful but discomposing cygnet.

Indeed, after holding out feebly against the siege of wealth at Tasajara and San Francisco, Mrs. Harcourt had abandoned herself hopelessly to the horrors of its invasion; had allowed herself to be dragged from her kitchen by her exultant daughters and set up in black silk in a certain conventional respectability in the drawing-room. Strange to say, her commiserating hospitality, or hospital-like ministration, not only gave her popularity, but a certain kind of distinction. An exaltation so sorrowfully deprecated by its possessor was felt to be a sign of superiority. She was spoken of as "motherly," even by those who vaguely knew that there was somewhere a discarded son struggling in poverty with a helpless wife, and that she had sided with her husband in disinheriting a daughter who had married unwisely. She was sentimentally spoken of as a "true wife," while never opposing a single meanness of her husband, suggesting a single active virtue, nor questioning her right to sacrifice herself and her family for his sake. With nothing she cared to affect she was quite free from affectation, and even the critical Lawrence Grant was struck with the dignity which her narrow simplicity, that had seemed small even in Sidon, attained in her palatial hall in San Francisco. It appeared to be a perfectly logical conclusion that when such unaffectedness and simplicity were forced to assume a hostile attitude to anybody, the latter must be to blame.

Since the festival of Tasajara Mr. Grant had been a frequent visitor at Harcourt's, and was a guest on the eve of his departure from San Francisco. The distinguished position of each made their relations appear quite natural without inciting gossip as to any attraction in Harcourt's daughters. It was late one afternoon as he was passing the door of Harcourt's study that his host called him in. He found him sitting at his desk with some papers before him and a folded copy of the *Clarion*. With his back to the fading light of the window his face was partly in shadow.

"By the way, Grant," he began, with an assumption of carelessness somewhat inconsistent with the fact

that he had just called him in, "it may be necessary for me to pull up those fellows who are blackguarding me in the *Clarion*."

"Why, they haven't been saying anything new?" asked Grant, laughingly, as he glanced towards the paper.

"No—that is—only a re-hash of what they said before," returned Harcourt without opening the paper.

"Well," said Grant playfully, "you don't mind their saying that you're *not* the original pioneer of Tasajara, for it's true; nor that that fellow Lige Curtis disappeared suddenly, for he did, if I remember rightly. But there's nothing in that to invalidate your rights to Tasajara, to say nothing of your five years' undisputed possession."

"Of course there's no *legal* question," said Harcourt almost sharply. "But as a matter of absurd report, I may want to contradict their insinuations. And *you* remember all the circumstances, don't you?"

"I should think so! Why, my dear fellow, I've told it everywhere!—here, in New York, Newport, and in London; by Jove! it's one of my best stories. How a company sent me out with a surveyor to look up a railroad and agricultural possibilities in the wilderness; how just as I found them—and a rather big thing they made, too—I was set afloat by a flood and a raft, and drifted ashore on your bank, and practically demonstrated to you what you didn't know and didn't dare to hope for—that there could be a waterway straight to Sidon from the *embarcadero*. I've told what a charming evening we had with you and your daughters in the old house, and how I returned your hospitality by giving you a tip about the railroad; and how you slipped out while we were playing cards, to clinch the bargain for the land with that drunken fellow, Lige Curtis——"

"What's that?" interrupted Harcourt, quickly.

It was well that the shadow hid from Grant the expression of Harcourt's face, or his reply might have been sharper. As it was, he answered a little stiffly:

"I beg your pardon——"

Harcourt recovered himself. "You're all wrong!" he said, "that bargain was made long *before;* I never saw Lige Curtis after you came to the house. It was before that, in the afternoon," he went on hurriedly, "that he was last in my store. I can prove it." Nevertheless he was so shocked and indignant at being confronted in his own suppressions and falsehoods by an even greater and more astounding misconception of fact, that for a moment he felt helpless. What, he reflected, if it were alleged that Lige had returned again after the loafers had gone, or had never left the store as had beeen said? Nonsense! There was John Milton, who had been there reading all the time, and who could disprove it. Yes, but—John Milton—was his discarded son—his enemy—perhaps even his very slanderer!

"But," said Grant quietly, "don't you remember that your daughter Euphemia said something that evening about the land Lige had *offered* you, and you snapped up the young lady rather sharply for letting out secrets, and *then* you went out? At least that's my impression."

It was, however, more than an impression; with Grant's scientific memory for characteristic details he had noticed that particular circumstance as part of the social phenomena.

"I don't know what Phemie *said*," returned Harcourt impatiently, "I *know* there was no offer pending; the land had been sold to me before I ever saw you. Why — you must have thought me up to pretty sharp practice with Curtis—eh?" he added, with a forced laugh.

Grant smiled; he had been accustomed to hear of such sharp practice among his business acquaintance, although he himself by nature and profession was incapable of it, but he had not deemed Harcourt more scrupulous than others. "Perhaps so," he said lightly, "but for Heaven's sake don't

ask me to spoil my reputation as a *raconteur* for the sake of a mere fact or two. I assure you it's a mighty taking story as *I* tell it—and it don't hurt you in a business way. You're the hero of it—hang it all!"

"Yes," said Harcourt, without noticing Grant's half cynical superiority, "but you'll oblige me if you won't tell it again *in that way*. There are men here mean enough to make the worst of it. It's nothing to me—of course—but my family—the girls, you know, are rather sensitive."

"I had no idea they even knew it—much less cared for it," said Grant, with sudden seriousness. "I dare say if those fellows in the *Clarion* knew that they were annoying the ladies they'd drop it. Who's the editor? Look here—leave it to me; I'll look into it. Better that you shouldn't appear in the matter at all."

"You understand that if it was a really serious matter, Grant," said Harcourt with a slight attitude, "I shouldn't allow any one to take my place."

"My dear fellow, there'll be nobody 'called out' and no 'shooting at sight' whatever is the result of my interference," returned Grant, lightly. "It'll be all right." He was quite aware of the power of his own independent position and the fact that he had been often appealed to before in delicate arbitration.

Harcourt was equally conscious of this, but by a strange inconsistency now felt relieved at the coolness with which Grant had accepted the misconception which had at first seemed so dangerous. If he were ready to condone what he thought was *sharp practice* he could not be less lenient with the real facts that might come out—of course always excepting that interpolated consideration in the bill of sale, which, however, no one but the missing Curtis could ever discover. The fact that a man of Grant's secure position had interested himself in this matter would secure him from the working of that personal vulgar jealousy which his humbler antecedents had provoked. And if, as he fancied, Grant really cared for Clementina——

"As you like," he said, with half-affected lightness, "and now let us talk of something else. Clementina has been thinking of getting up a riding party to San Mateo for Mrs. Ashwood. We must show them some civility, and that Boston brother of hers, Mr. Shipley, will have to be invited also. I can't get away, and my wife of course will only be able to join them at San Mateo in the carriage. I reckon it would be easier for Clementina if you took my place, and helped her look after the riding party. It will need a man, and I think she'd prefer you—as you know she's rather particular—unless of course you'ld be wanted for Mrs. Ashwood or Phemie, or somebody else."

From his shadowed corner he could see that a pleasant light had sprung into Grant's eyes, although his reply was in his ordinary easy banter. "I shall be only too glad to act as Miss Clementina's *vaquero*, and lassoo her runaways, or keep stragglers in the road."

There seemed to be small necessity, however, for this active co-operation, for when the cheerful cavalcade started from the house a few mornings later, Mr. Lawrence Grant's onerous duties seemed to be simply confined to those of an ordinary cavalier at the side of Miss Clementina—a few paces in the rear of the party. But this safe distance gave them the opportunity of conversing without being overheard—an apparently discreet precaution.

"Your father was so exceedingly affable to me the other day that if I hadn't given you my promise to say nothing, I think I would have fallen on my knees to him then and there, revealed my feelings, asked for your hand and his blessing—or whatever one does at such a time. But how long do you intend to keep me in this suspense?"

Clementina turned her clear eyes half abstractedly upon him as if im-

perfectly recalling some forgotten situation. "You forget," she said, "that part of your promise was that you wouldn't even speak of it to me again without my permission."

"But my time is so short now. Give me some definite hope before I go. Let me believe that when we meet in New York——"

"You will find me just the same as now! Yes! I think I can promise *that*. Let that suffice. You said the other day you liked me because I had not changed for five years. You can surely trust that I will not alter in as many months."

"If I only knew——"

"Ah, if *I* only knew—if *we all* only knew. But we don't. Come, Mr. Grant, let it rest as it is. Unless you want to go still further back and have it as it *was*—at Sidon. There I think you fancied Euphemia most."

"Clementina!"

"That is my name, and those people ahead of us know it already."

"You are called *Clementina*—but you are not merciful!"

"You are very wrong, for you might see that Mr. Shipley has twice checked his horse that he might hear what you are saying, and Phemie is always showing Mrs. Ashwood something in the landscape behind us."

All this was the more hopeless and exasperating to Grant since in the young girl's speech and manner there was not the slightest trace of coquetry or playfulness. He could not help saying a little bitterly: "I don't think that any one would imagine from your manner that you were receiving a declaration."

"But they might imagine from yours that you had the right to quarrel with me—which would be worse."

"We cannot part like this! It is too cruel to me."

"We cannot part otherwise without the risk of greater cruelty."

"But say at least, Clementina, that I have no rival? There is no other more favoured suitor?"

"That is so like a man—and yet so unlike the proud one I believed you to be. Why should a man like you even consider such a possibility? If I were a man I know *I* couldn't." She turned upon him a glance so clear and untroubled by either conscious vanity or evasion that he was hopelessly convinced of the truth of her statement, and she went on in a slightly lowered tone, "You have no right to ask me such a question—but perhaps for that reason I am willing to answer you. There is none. Hush! For a good rider you are setting a poor example to the others, by crowding me towards the bank. Go forward and talk to Phemie and tell her not to worry Mrs. Ashwood's horse nor race with her; I don't think he's quite safe and Mrs. Ashwood isn't accustomed to using the Spanish bit. I suppose I must say something to Mr. Shipley, who doesn't seem to understand that *I'm* acting as *chaperone*, and *you* as captain of the party."

She cantered forward as she spoke, and Grant was obliged to join her sister, who, mounted on a powerful roan, was mischievously exciting a beautiful quaker-coloured mustang ridden by Mrs. Ashwood, already irritated by the unfamiliar pressure of the Eastern woman's hand upon his bit. The thick dust which had forced the party of twenty to close up in two solid files across the road compelled them at the first opening in the roadside fence to take the field in a straggling gallop. Grant, eager to escape from his own discontented self by doing something for others reined in beside Euphemia and the fair stranger.

"Let me take your place until Mrs. Ashwood's horse is quieted," he half whispered to Euphemia.

"Thank you—and I suppose it does not make any matter to Clem who quiets mine," she said with provoking eyes and a toss of her head worthy of the spirited animal she was riding.

"She thinks you quite capable of managing yourself and even others," he replied with a playful glance at

Shipley, who was riding somewhat stiffly on the other side.

"Don't be too sure," retorted Phemie with another dangerous look; "I may give you trouble yet."

They were approaching the first undulation of the russet plain they had emerged upon—an umbrageous slope that seemed suddenly to diverge in two defiles among the shaded hills. Grant had given a few words of practical advice to Mrs. Ashwood, and shown her how to guide her mustang by the merest caressing touch of the rein upon its sensitive neck. He had not been sympathetically inclined towards the fair stranger, a rich and still youthful widow, although he could not deny her unquestioned good breeding, mental refinement, and a certain languorous thoughtfulness that was almost melancholy, which accented her blonde delicacy. But he had noticed that her manner was politely reserved and slightly constrained towards the Harcourts, and he had already resented it with a lover's instinctive loyalty. He had at first attributed it to a want of sympathy between Mrs. Ashwood's more intellectual sentimentalities and the Harcourts undeniable lack of any sentiment whatever. But there was evidently some other innate antagonism. He was very polite to Mrs. Ashwood; she responded with a gentlewoman's courtesy, and, he was forced to admit, even a broader comprehension of his own merits than the Harcourt girls had ever shown, but he could still detect that she was not in accord with the party.

"I am afraid you do not like California, Mrs. Ashwood?" he said pleasantly. "You perhaps find the life here too unrestrained and unconventional?"

She looked at him in quick astonishment. "Are you quite sincere? Why it strikes me that this is just what it is *not*. And I have so longed for something quite different. From what I had been told about the originality and adventure of everything here, and your independence of old social forms and customs, I am afraid I expected the opposite of what I've seen. Why this very party, except that the ladies are prettier and more expensively gotten up—is like any party that might have ridden out at Saratoga or New York."

"And as stupid, you would say."

"As *conventional*, Mr. Grant; always excepting this lovely creature beneath me, whom I can't make out and who doesn't seem to care that I should. There! look! I told you so!"

Her mustang had suddenly bounded forward, but as Grant followed he could see that the cause was the example of Phemie, who had, in some mad freak, dashed out in a frantic gallop. A half-dozen of the younger people hilariously accepted the challenge; the excitement was communicated to the others, until the whole cavalcade was sweeping down the slope. Grant was still at Mrs. Ashwood's side, restraining her mustang and his own impatient horse when Clementina joined them. "Phemie's mare has really bolted, I fear," she said in a quick whisper, "ride on and never mind us." Grant looked quickly ahead; Phemie's roan, excited by the shouts behind her and to all appearance ungovernable, was fast disappearing with her rider. Without a word, trusting to his own good horsemanship and better knowledge of the ground, he darted out of the cavalcade to overtake her.

But the unfortunate result of this was to give further impulse to the now racing horses as they approached a point where the slope terminated in two diverging cañons. Mrs. Ashwood gave a sharp pull upon her bit. To her consternation the mustang stopped short almost instantly—planting his two fore feet rigidly in the dust and even sliding forward with the impetus. Had her seat been less firm she might have been thrown, but she recovered herself, although in doing so she still bore upon the bit, when to her astonishment the mustang deliberately stiffened himself as if for a shock, and then began to back slowly, quiver-

ing with excitement. She did not know that her native-bred animal fondly believed that he was participating in a *rodeo*, and that to his equine intelligence his fair mistress had just lassooed something! In vain she urged him forward; he still waited for the shock! When the cloud of dust in which she had been enwrapped drifted away, she saw to her amazement that she was alone. The entire party had disappeared into one of the cañons—but which one she could not tell!

When she succeeded at last in urging her mustang forward again she determined to take the right-hand cañon and trust to being either met or overtaken. A more practical and less adventurous nature would have waited at the point of divergence for the return of some of the party, but Mrs. Ashwood was, in truth, not sorry to be left to herself and the novel scenery for a while, and she had no doubt but she would eventually find her way to the hotel at San Mateo, which could not be far away, in time for luncheon.

The road was still well defined, although it presently began to wind between ascending ranks of pines and larches that marked the terraces of hills, so high that she wondered she had not noticed them from the plains. An unmistakable suggestion of some haunting primeval solitude—a sense of the hushed and mysterious proximity of a nature she had never known before; the strange half intoxicating breath of unsunned foliage and untrodden grasses and herbs all combined to exalt her as she cantered forward. Even her horse seemed to have acquired an intelligent liberty or rather to have established a sympathy with her in his needs and her own longings; instinctively she no longer pulled him with the curb; the reins hung loosely on his self-arched and unfettered neck; secure in this loneliness she found herself even talking to him with barbaric freedom. As she went on the vague hush of all things animate and inanimate around her seemed to thicken, until she unconsciously halted before a dim and pillared wood and a vast and heathless opening on whose mute brown lips Nature seemed to have laid the finger of silence. She forgot the party she had left, she forgot the luncheon she was going to; more important still she forgot that she had already left the travelled track far behind her, and, tremulous with anticipation, rode timidly into that arch of shadow.

As her horse's hoofs fell noiselessly on the elastic moss-carpeted aisle she forgot even more than that. She forgot the artificial stimulus and excitement of the life she had been leading so long; she forgot the small meannesses and smaller worries of her well-to-do experiences; she forgot herself—rather she regained a self she had long forgotten. For in the sweet seclusion of this half-darkened sanctuary the clinging fripperies of her past slipped from her as a tawdry garment. The petted, spoiled, and vapidly precocious girlhood which had merged into a womanhood of aimless triumphs and meaner ambitions; the worldly but miserable triumph of a marriage that had left her delicacy abused and her heart sick and unsatisfied; the wifehood without home, seclusion, or maternity; the widowhood that at last brought relief, but with it the consciousness of hopelessly wasted youth—all this seemed to drop from her here as lightly as the winged needles or noiseless withered spray from the dim grey vault above her head. In the sovereign balm of that woodland breath her better spirit was restored; somewhere in these wholesome shades seemed to still lurk what should have been her innocent and nymph-like youth, and to come out once more and greet her. Old songs she had forgotten, or whose music had failed in the discords of her frivolous life, sang themselves to her again in that sweet, grave silence; girlish dreams that she had foolishly been ashamed of, or had put away with her childish toys, stole

back to her once more and became real in this tender twilight; old fancies, old fragments of verse and childish lore, grew palpable and moved faintly before her. The boyish prince who should have come was there; the babe that should have been hers was there!—she stopped suddenly with flaming eyes and indignant colour. For it appeared that a *man* was there too, and had just risen from the fallen tree where he had been sitting.

CHAPTER VIII.

She had so far forgotten herself in yielding to the spell of the place and in the revelation of her naked soul and inner nature that it was with something of the instinct of outraged modesty that she seemed to shrink before this apparition of the outer world and outer worldliness. In an instant the nearer past returned; she remembered where she was, how she had come there, who she had come from, and to whom she was returning. She could see that she had not only aimlessly wandered from the world but from the road; and for that instant she hated this man who had reminded her of it, even while she knew she must ask his assistance. It relieved her slightly to observe that he seemed as disturbed and impatient as herself, and as he took a pencil from between his lips and returned it to his pocket he scarcely looked at her.

But with her return to the world of *convenances* came its repression, and with a gentlewoman's ease and modulated voice she leaned over her mustang's neck and said: "I have strayed from my party and am afraid I have lost my way. We were going to the hotel at San Mateo. Would you be kind enough to direct me there, or show me how I can regain the road by which I came?"

Her voice and manner were quite enough to arrest him where he stood with a pleased surprise in his fresh and ingenuous face. She looked at him more closely. He was, in spite of his long silken moustache, so absurdly young; he might, in spite of that youth, be so absurdly man-like! What was he doing there? Was he a farmer's son, an artist, a surveyor, or a city clerk out for a holiday? Was there perhaps a youthful female of his species somewhere for whom he was waiting and upon whose tryst she was now breaking? Was he—terrible thought!—the outlying picket of some family picnic? His dress, neat, simple, free from ostentatious ornament, betrayed nothing. She waited for his voice.

"Oh, you have left San Mateo miles away to the right," he said with quick youthful sympathy, "at least five miles! Where did you leave your party?"

His voice was winning, and even refined, she thought. She answered it quite spontaneously: "At a fork of two roads. I see now I took the wrong turning."

"Yes, you took the road to Crystal Spring. It's just down there in the valley, not more than a mile. You'd have been there now if you hadn't turned off at the woods."

"I couldn't help it, it was so beautiful."

"Isn't it?"

"Perfect."

"And such shadows, and such intensity of colour."

"Wonderful!—and all along the ridge, looking down that defile!"

"Yes, and that point where it seems as if you had only to stretch out your hand to pick a manzanita berry from the other side of the cañon,—half a mile across!"

"Yes! and that first glimpse of the valley through the Gothic gateway of rocks."

"And the colour of those rocks—cinnamon and bronze with the light green of the *Yerba buena* vine splashing over them."

"Yes, but for colour *did* you notice that hillside of yellow poppies pouring down into the valley like a golden Niagara?"

"Certainly—and the perfect clearness of everything."

"And yet such complete silence and repose!"

"Oh, yes!"

"Ah, yes!"

They were both gravely nodding and shaking their heads with sparkling eyes and brightened colour, looking not at each other but at the far landscape vignetted through a lozenge-shaped wind opening in the trees. Suddenly Mrs. Ashwood straightened herself in the saddle, looked grave, lifted the reins and apparently the ten years with them that had dropped from her. But she said in her easiest well-bred tones, and a half sigh, "Then I must take the road back again to where it forks?"

"Oh, no! you can go by Crystal Spring. It's no further, and I'll show you the way. But you'd better stop and rest yourself and your horse for a little while at the Springs Hotel. It's a very nice place. Many people ride there from San Francisco to luncheon and return. I wonder that your party didn't prefer it; and if they are looking for you—as they surely must be," he said, as if with a sudden conception of her importance, "they'll come there when they find you're not at San Mateo."

This seemed reasonable, although the process of being "fetched" and taking the five miles ride, which she had enjoyed so much alone, in company was not attractive. "Couldn't I go on at once?" she said impulsively.

"You would meet them sooner," he said thoughtfully.

This was quite enough for Mrs. Ashwood. "I think I'll rest this poor horse who is really tired," she said with charming hypocrisy, "and stop at the hotel."

She saw his face brighten. Perhaps he was the son of the hotel proprietor or a youthful partner himself. "I suppose you live here?" she suggested gently. "You seem to know the place so well."

"No," he returned quickly; "I only run down here from San Francisco when I can get a day off."

A day off! He was in some regular employment. But he continued: "And I used to go to boarding-school near here, and know all these woods well."

He must be a native! How odd! She had not conceived that there might be any other population here than the immigrants; perhaps that was what made him so interesting and different from the others. "Then your father and mother live here?" she said.

His frank face, incapable of disguise, changed suddenly. "No," he said simply, but without any trace of awkwardness. Then after a slight pause he laid his hand—she noticed it was white and well-kept—on her mustang's neck, and said, "If—if—you care to trust yourself to me I could lead you and your horse down a trail into the valley that is at least a third of the distance shorter. It would save you going back to the regular road, and there are one or two lovely views that I could show you. I should be so pleased, if it would not trouble you. There's a steep place or two—but I think there's no danger."

"I shall not be afraid."

She smiled so graciously, and, as she fully believed, maternally, that he looked at her the second time. To his first hurried impression of her as an elegant and delicately nurtured woman—one of the class of distinguished tourists that fashion was beginning to send thither—he had now to add that she had a quantity of fine silken-spun light hair gathered in a heavy braid beneath her grey hat; that her mouth was very delicately lipped and beautifully sensitive; that her soft skin, although just then touched with excitement, was a pale faded velvet, and seemed to be worn with *ennui* rather than experience; that her eyes were hidden behind a strip of grey veil whence only a faint glow was discernible. To this must still be added a poetic fancy all his own that, as she sat there, with the skirt of her grey habit falling from her long bodiced waist over the mustang's fawn-

coloured flanks, and with her slim gauntleted hands lightly swaying the reins, she looked like Queen Guinevere in the forest. Not that he particularly fancied Queen Guinevere, or that he at all imagined himself Launcelot, but it was quite in keeping with the suggestion-haunted brain of John Milton Harcourt, whom the astute reader has of course long since recognised.

Preceding her through the soft carpeted vault with a woodman's instinct—for there was apparently no trail to be seen—the soft inner twilight began to give way to the outer stronger day, and presently she was startled to see the clear blue of the sky before her on apparently the same level as the brown pine-tesselated floor she was treading. Not only did this show her that she was crossing a ridge of the upland, but a few moments later she had passed beyond the woods to a golden hillside that sloped towards a leafy, sheltered, and exquisitely-proportioned valley. A tiny but picturesque tower, and a few straggling roofs and gables, the flashing of a crystal stream through the leaves, and a narrow white riband of road winding behind it indicated the hostelry they were seeking. So peaceful and unfrequented it looked, nestling between the hills, that it seemed as if they had discovered it.

With his hand at times upon the bridle, at others merely caressing her mustang's neck, he led the way; there were a few breathless places where the crown of his straw hat appeared between her horse's reins, and again when she seemed almost slipping over on his shoulder, but they were passed with such frank fearlessness and invincible youthful confidence on the part of her escort that she felt no timidity. There were moments when a bit of the charmed landscape unfolding before them overpowered them both, and they halted to gaze—sometimes without a word, or only a significant gesture of sympathy and attention. At one of those artistic manifestations Mrs. Ashwood laid her slim gloved fingers lightly but unwittingly on John Milton's arm, and withdrew them, however, with a quick girlish apology and a foolish colour which annoyed her more than the appearance of familiarity. But they were now getting well down into the valley; the court of the little hotel was already opening before them; their unconventional relations in the idyllic world above had changed; the new ones required some delicacy of handling, and she had an idea that even the simplicity of the young stranger might be confusing.

"I must ask you to continue to act as my escort," she said, laughingly; "I am Mrs. Ashwood of Philadelphia, visiting San Francisco with my sister and brother, who are, I am afraid, even now hopelessly waiting luncheon for me at San Mateo. But as there seems to be no prospect of my joining them in time, I hope you will be able to give me the pleasure of your company with whatever they may give us here in the way of refreshment."

"I shall be very happy," returned John Milton with unmistakable candour; "but perhaps some of your friends will be arriving in quest of you, if they are not already here."

"Then they will join us or wait," said Mrs. Ashwood incisively, with her first exhibition of the imperiousness of a rich and pretty woman. Perhaps she was a little annoyed that her elaborate introduction of herself had produced no reciprocal disclosure by her companion. "Will you please send the landlord to me?" she added.

John Milton disappeared in the hotel as she cantered to the porch. In another moment she was giving the landlord her orders with the easy confidence of one who knew herself only as an always welcome and highly privileged guest, which was not without its effect. "And," she added carelessly, "when everything is ready you will please tell—Mr.——"

"Harcourt," suggested the landlord promptly.

Mrs. Ashwood's perfectly trained face gave not the slightest sign of the surprise that had overtaken her. "Of course—Mr. Harcourt."

"You know he's the son of the millionaire," continued the landlord, not at all unwilling to display the importance of the *habitués* of Crystal Spring, "though they've quarrelled and don't get on together."

"I know," said the lady languidly; "and, if any one comes here for *me*, ask them to wait in the parlour until I come."

Then, submitting herself and her dusty habit to the awkward ministration of the Irish chambermaid, she was quite thrilled with a delightful curiosity. She vaguely remembered that she had heard something of the Harcourt family discord—but that was the divorced daughter surely! And this young man was Harcourt's son, and they had quarrelled! A quarrel with a frank, open, ingenuous fellow like that—a mere boy—could only be the father's fault. Luckily she had never mentioned the name of Harcourt! She would not now; he need not know that it was his father who had originated the party; why should she make him uncomfortable for the few moments they were together?

There was nothing of this in her face as she descended and joined him. He thought that face handsome, well-bred, and refined. But this breeding and refinement seemed to him—in his ignorance of the world possibly—as only a graceful concealment of a self of which he knew nothing, and he was not surprised to find that her pretty grey eyes, now no longer hidden by her veil, really told him no more than her lips. He was a little afraid of her, and now that she had lost her naïve enthusiasm he was conscious of a vague remorsefulness for his interrupted work in the forest. What was he doing here? He who had avoided the cruel, selfish world of wealth and pleasure—a world that this woman represented—the world that had stood apart from him in the one dream of his life—and had let Loo die! His quickly responsive face darkened.

"I am afraid I really interrupted you up there," she said gently, looking in his face with an expression of unfeigned concern; "you were at work of some kind, I know. And I have very selfishly thought only of myself. But the whole scene was so new to me, and I so rarely meet any one who sees things as I do, that I know you will forgive me." She bent her eyes upon him with a certain soft timidity. "You are an artist?"

"I am afraid not," he said, colouring and smiling faintly; "I don't think I could draw a straight line."

"Don't try to; they're not pretty, and the mere ability to draw them straight or curved doesn't make an artist. But you are a *lover* of nature, I know, and from what I have heard you say I believe you can do what lovers cannot do—make others feel as they do—and that is what I call being an artist. You write? You are a poet?"

"Oh, dear no," he said with a smile, half of relief and half of naïve superiority, "I'm a prose writer—on a daily newspaper."

To his surprise she was not disconcerted; rather a look of animation lit up her face as she said brightly, "Oh, then, you can of course satisfy my curiosity about something. You know the road from San Francisco to the Cliff House. Except for the view of the sea lions when one gets there it's stupid; my brother says it's like all the San Francisco excursions—a dusty drive with a julep at the end of it. Well, one day we were coming back from a drive there, and when we were beginning to wind along the brow of that dreadful staring Lone Mountain Cemetery, I said I would get out and walk, and avoid the obtrusive glitter of those tombstones rising before me all the way. I pushed open a little gate and passed in. Once among these funereal shrubs and cold statuesque lilies everything was changed; I saw the staring tombstones no longer, for, like them, I seemed to be always

facing the sea. The road had vanished; everything had vanished but the endless waste of ocean below me, and the last slope of rock and sand. It seemed to be the fittest place for a cemetery—this end of the crumbling earth—this beginning of the eternal sea. There! don't think that idea my own, or that I thought of it then. No,—I read it all afterwards, and that's why I'm telling you this."

She could not help smiling at his now attentive face, and went on: "Some days afterwards I got hold of a newspaper four or six months old, and there was a description of all that I thought I had seen and felt—only far more beautiful and touching as you shall see, for I cut it out of the paper and have kept it. It seemed to me that it must be some personal experience—as if the writer had followed some dear friend there—although it was with the unostentation and indefiniteness of true and delicate feeling. It impressed me so much that I went back there twice or thrice, and always seemed to move to the rhythm of that beautiful funeral march—and I am afraid, being a woman, that I wandered around among the graves as though I could find out who it was that had been sung so sweetly, and if it were man or woman. I've got it here," she said, taking a dainty ivory *porte monnaie* from her pocket and picking out with two slim finger tips a folded slip of newspaper; "and I thought that maybe you might recognise the style of the writer, and perhaps know something of his history. For I believe he has one. There! that is only a part of the article of course, but it is the part that interested me. Just read from there," she pointed, leaning partly over his shoulder so that her soft breath stirred his hair, "to the end; it isn't long."

In the film that seemed to come across his eyes, suddenly the print appeared blurred and indistinct. But he knew that she had put into his hand something he had written after the death of his wife; something spontaneous and impulsive, when her loss still filled his days and nights and almost unconsciously swayed his pen. He remembered that his eyes had been as dim when he wrote it—and now—handed to him by this smiling, well-to-do woman, he was as shocked at first as if he had suddenly found her reading his private letters. This was followed by a sudden sense of shame that he had ever thus publicly bared his feelings, and then by the illogical but irresistible conviction that it was false and stupid. The few phrases she had pointed out appeared as cheap and hollow rhetoric amid the surroundings of their social *tête-à-tête* over the luncheon-table. There was small danger that this heady wine of woman's praise would make him betray himself; there was no sign of gratified authorship in his voice as he quietly laid down the paper and said drily: "I am afraid I can't help you. You know it may be purely fanciful."

"I don't think so," said Mrs. Ashwood thoughtfully. "At the same time it doesn't strike me as a very abiding grief for that very reason. It's *too* sympathetic. It strikes me that it might be the first grief of some one too young to be inured to sorrow or experienced enough to accept it as the common lot. But like all youthful impressions it is very sincere and true while it lasts. I don't know whether one gets anything more real when one gets older."

With an insincerity he could not account for, he now felt inclined to defend his previous sentiment, although all the while conscious of a certain charm in his companion's graceful scepticism. He had in his truthfulness and independence hitherto always been quite free from that feeble admiration of cynicism which attacks the intellectually weak and immature, and his present predilection may have been due more to her charming personality. She was not at all like his sisters; she had none of Clementina's cold abstraction, and none of Euphemia's sharp and demonstrative effusiveness.

And in his secret consciousness of her flattering fore-knowledge of him, with her assurance that before they had ever met he had unwittingly influenced her, he began to feel more at his ease. His fair companion also, in the equally secret knowledge she had acquired of his history, felt as secure as if she had been formally introduced. Nobody could find fault with her for showing civility to the ostensible son of her host—it was not necessary that she should be aware of their family differences. There was a charm too in their enforced isolation, in what was the exceptional solitude of the little hotel that day, and the seclusion of their table by the window of the dining-room, which gave a charming domesticity to their repast. From time to time they glanced down the lonely cañon, losing itself in the afternoon shadow. Nevertheless Mrs. Ashwood's pre-occupation with Nature did not preclude a human curiosity to hear something more of John Milton's quarrel with his father. There was certainly nothing of the prodigal son about him; there was no precocious evil knowledge in his frank eyes; no record of excesses in his healthy, fresh complexion; no unwholesome or disturbed tastes in what she had seen of his rural preferences and understanding of natural beauty. To have attempted any direct questioning that would have revealed his name and identity would have obliged her to speak of herself as his father's guest. She began indirectly; he had said he had been a reporter, and he was still a chronicler of this strange life. He had of course heard of many cases of family feuds and estrangements! Her brother had told her of some dreadful vendettas he had known in the south-west, and how whole families had been divided. Since she had been here she had heard of odd cases of brothers meeting accidentally after long and unaccounted separations; of husbands suddenly confronted with wives they had deserted; of fathers encountering discarded sons!

John Milton's face betrayed no uneasy consciousness. If anything it was beginning to glow with a boyish admiration of the grace and intelligence of the fair speaker, that was perhaps heightened by an assumption of half coquettish discomfiture.

"You are laughing at me!" she said finally. "But inhuman and selfish as these stories may seem, and sometimes are, I believe that these curious estrangements and separations often come from some fatal weakness of temperament that might be strengthened, or some trivial misunderstanding that could be explained. It is separation that makes them seem irrevocable only because they are inexplicable, and a vague memory always seems more terrible than a definite one. Facts may be forgiven and forgotten but mysteries haunt one always. I believe there are weak, sensitive people who dread to put their wrongs into shape—those are the kind who sulk, and when you add separation to sulking, reconciliation becomes impossible. I knew a very singular case of that kind once. If you like, I'll tell it to you. Maybe you will be able, some day, to weave it into one of your writings. And it's quite true."

It is hardly necessary to say that John Milton had not been touched by any personal significance in his companion's speech, whatever she may have intended; and it is equally true that whether she had presently forgotten her purpose, or had become suddenly interested in her own conversation, her face grew more animated, her manner more confidential, and something of the youthful enthusiasm she had shown in the mountain seemed to come back to her.

"I might say it happened anywhere and call the people M. or N., but it really did occur in my own family, and although I was much younger at the time it impressed me very strongly. My cousin, who had been my playmate, was an orphan, and had been entrusted to the care of my father, who was his guardian. He was always a

clever boy, but singularly sensitive and quick to take offence. Perhaps it was because the little property his father had left made him partly dependent on my father, and that I was rich, but he seemed to feel the disparity in our positions. I was too young to understand it; I think it existed only in his imagination, for I believe we were treated alike. But I remember that he was full of vague threats of running away and going to sea, and that it was part of his weak temperament to terrify me with his extravagant confidences. I was always frightened when, after one of those scenes, he would pack his valise or perhaps only tie up a few things in a handkerchief, as in the advertisement pictures of the runaway slaves, and declare that we would never lay eyes upon him again. At first I never saw the ridiculousness of all this—for I ought to have told you that he was a rather delicate and timid boy, and quite unfitted for a rough life or any exposure—but others did, and one day I laughed at him and told him he was afraid. I shall never forget the expression of his face and never forgive myself for it. He went away,—but he returned the next day! He threatened once to commit suicide, left his clothes on the bank of the river, and came home in another suit of clothes he had taken with him. When I was sent abroad to school I lost sight of him; when I returned he was at college—apparently unchanged. When he came home for vacation,—far from having been subdued by contact with strangers—it seemed that his unhappy sensitiveness had been only intensified by the ridicule of his fellows. He had even acquired a most ridiculous theory about the degrading effects of civilisation, and wanted to go back to a state of barbarism. He said the wilderness was the only true home of man. My father, instead of bearing with what I believe was his infirmity, drily offered him the means to try his experiment. He started for some place in Texas, saying we would never hear from him again. A month after he wrote for more money. My father replied rather impatiently—I suppose—I never knew exactly what he wrote. That was some years ago. He had told the truth at last, for we never heard from him again."

It is to be feared that John Milton was following the animated lips and eyes of the fair speaker rather than her story. Perhaps that was the reason why he said: "May he not have been a disappointed man?"

"I don't understand," she said simply.

"Perhaps," said John Milton with a boyish blush, "you may have unconsciously raised hopes in his heart—and——"

"I should hardly attempt to interest a chronicler of adventure like you in such a very commonplace, every-day style of romance," she said, with a little impatience, "even if my vanity compelled me to make such confidences to a stranger. No—it was nothing quite as vulgar as that. And," she added quickly, with a playfully amused smile as she saw the young fellow's evident distress, "I should have probably heard from him again. Those stories always end in that way."

"And you think——?" said John Milton.

"I think," said Mrs. Ashwood slowly, "that he actually did commit suicide—or effaced himself in some way, just as firmly as I believe he might have been saved by judicious treatment. Otherwise we should have heard from him. You'll say that's only a woman's reasoning—but I think our perceptions are often instinctive, and I knew his character."

Still following the play of her delicate features into a romance of his own weaving, the imaginative young reporter, who had seen so much from the heights of Russian Hill, said earnestly: "Then I have your permission to use this material at any future time?"

"Yes," said the lady smilingly.

"And you will not mind if I should take some liberties with the text?"

"I must of course leave something to your artistic taste. But you will let me see it?"

There were voices outside now, breaking the silence of the verandah. They had been so preoccupied as not to notice the arrival of a horseman. Steps came along the passage; the landlord returned. Mrs. Ashwood turned quickly towards him.

"Mr. Grant, of your party, ma'am, to fetch you."

She saw an unmistakable change in her young friend's mobile face. "I will be ready in a moment," she said to the landlord. Then turning to John Milton the arch-hypocrite said sweetly: "My brother must have known instinctively that I was in good hands, as he didn't come. But I am sorry, for I should have so liked to introduce him to you—although by the way," with a bright smile, "I don't think you have yet told me your name. I know I couldn't have *forgotten* it."

"Harcourt," said John Milton, with a half embarrassed laugh.

"But you must come and see me, Mr.—Mr. Harcourt," she said, producing a card from a case already in her fingers, "at my hotel, and let my brother thank you there for your kindness and gallantry to a stranger. I shall be here a few weeks longer before we go south to look for a place where my brother can winter. *Do* come and see me, although *I* cannot introduce you to anything as real and beautiful as what *you* have shown me to-day. Good-bye, Mr. Harcourt; I won't trouble you to come down and bore yourself with my escort's questions and congratulations."

She bent her head and allowed her soft eyes to rest upon his with a graciousness that was beyond her speech, pulled her veil over her eyes again, with a pretty suggestion that she had no further use for them, and taking her riding-skirt lightly in her hand seemed to glide from the room.

On her way to San Mateo, where it appeared the disorganised party had prolonged their visit to accept an invitation to dine with a local magnate, she was pleasantly conversational with the slightly abstracted Grant. She was so sorry to have given them all this trouble and anxiety! Of course she ought to have waited at the fork of the road, but she had never doubted but she could rejoin them presently on the main road. She was glad that Miss Euphemia's runaway horse had been stopped without accident; it would have been dreadful if anything had happened to *her*; Mr. Harcourt seemed so wrapped up in his girls. It was a pity they never had a son—Ah? Indeed! Then there was a son? So- and father and son had quarrelled? That was so sad. And for some trifling cause no doubt?

"I believe he married the housemaid," said Grant grimly. "Be careful!—Allow me."

"It's no use!" said Mrs. Ashwood, flushing with pink impatience, as she recovered her seat which a sudden bolt of her mustang had imperilled, "I really can't make out the tricks of this beast! Thank you," she added, with a sweet smile, "but I think I can manage him now. I can't see why he stopped. I'll be more careful. You were saying the son was married—surely not that boy!"

"Boy!" echoed Grant. "Then you know——?"

"I mean of course he must be a boy—they all grew up here—and it was only five or six years ago that their parents emigrated," she retorted a little impatiently. "And what about this creature?"

"Your horse?"

"You know I mean the woman he married. Of course she was older than he—and caught him?"

"I think there was a year or two difference," said Grant quietly.

"Yes, but your gallantry keeps you from telling the truth, which is that the women, in cases of this kind, are much older and more experienced."

"Are they? Well, perhaps she is *now*. She is dead."

Mrs. Ashwood walked her horse.

"Poor thing," she said. Then a sudden idea took possession of her and brought a film to her eyes. "How long ago?" she asked in a low voice.

"About six or seven months, I think. I believe there was a baby who died too."

She continued to walk her horse slowly, stroking its curved neck. "I think it's perfectly shameful!" she said suddenly.

"Not so bad as that, Mrs. Ashwood, surely. The girl may have loved him—and he——"

"You know perfectly what I mean, Mr. Grant—I speak of the conduct of the mother and father and those two sisters!"

Grant slightly elevated his eyebrows. "But you forget, Mrs. Ashwood. It was young Harcourt and his wife's own act—they preferred to take their own path and keep it."

"I think," said Mrs. Ashwood authoritatively, "that the idea of leaving those two unfortunate children to suffer and struggle on alone—out there—on the sand hills of San Francisco—was simply disgraceful!"

Later that evening she was unreasonably annoyed to find that her brother, Mr. John Shipley, had taken advantage of the absence of Grant to pay marked attention to Clementina, and had even prevailed upon that imperious goddess to accompany him after dinner on a moonlight stroll upon the verandah and terraces of *Los Pajaros*. Nevertheless she seemed to recover her spirits enough to talk volubly of the beautiful scenery she had discovered in her late perilous abandonment in the wilds of the Coast Range; to aver her intention to visit it again; to speak of it in a severely practical way as offering a far better site for the cottages of the young married couples just beginning life than the outskirts of towns or the bleak sand hills of San Francisco; and thence by graceful degrees into a dissertation upon popular fallacies in regard to hasty marriages, and the mistaken idea of some parents in not accepting the inevitable and making the best of it. She still found time to enter into an appreciative and exhaustive criticism upon the literature and journalistic enterprise of the Pacific Coast with the proprietor of the *Pioneer*, and to cause that gentleman to declare that whatever people might say about rich and fashionable Eastern women, that Mrs. Ashwood's head was about as level as it was pretty.

The next morning found her more thoughtful and subdued, and when her brother came upon her sitting on the verandah, while the party were preparing to return, she was reading a newspaper slip that she had taken from her *porte-monnaie*, with a face that was partly shadowed.

"What have you struck there, Conny?" said her brother gaily. "It looks too serious for a recipe."

"Something I should like you to read some time, Jack," she said, lifting her lashes with a slight timidity, "if you would take the trouble. I really wonder how it would impress you."

"Pass it over," said Jack Shipley good-humouredly, with his cigar between his lips. "I'll take it now."

She handed him the slip and turned partly away; he took it, glanced at it sideways, turned it over, and suddenly his look grew concentrated, and he took the cigar from his lips.

"Well," she said playfully, turning to him again. "What do you think of it?"

"Think of it?" he said with a rising colour. "I think it's infamous! Who did it?"

She stared at him, then glanced quickly at the slip. "What are you reading?" she said.

"This, of course," he said impatiently. "What you gave me." But he was pointing to *the other side* of the newspaper slip.

She took it from him impatiently and read for the first time the printing on the reverse side of the article she

had treasured so long. It was the concluding paragraph of an apparently larger editorial. "One thing is certain, that a man in Daniel Harcourt's position cannot afford to pass over in silence accusations like the above, that affect not only his private character, but the integrity of his title to the land that was the foundation of his fortune. When trickery, sharp practice, and even criminality in the past are more than hinted at, they cannot be met by mere pompous silence or allusions to private position, social prestige, or distinguished friends in the present."

Mrs. Ashwood turned the slip over with scornful impatience, a pretty uplifting of her eyebrows and a slight curl of her lip "I suppose none of those people's beginnings can bear looking into—and they certainly should be the last ones to find fault with anybody. But, good gracious, Jack! what has this to do with you?"

"With me?" said Shipley angrily. "Why I proposed to Clementina last night!"

(To be continued.)

AMONG THE LONELY HILLS.

A FEW days ago I was standing in the middle of a wide moor. There was no house in sight, or enclosed field, or plantation, or even tree, nothing that reminded one of man and his works except a low line of rough stones in the form of a square. The place looked like the ruin of an old fank or sheep-enclosure, but had once been a school-house, planted here long ago, in the middle of the moor where no one lived, that it might form a half-way house for two thinly populated districts. There is a tragic little story connected with it. One winter's morning, more than seventy years ago, two boys started off from their homes for this humble seat of learning, each carrying with him the couple of peats which in those days, and long afterwards, it was customary for children to give to the Dominie. But they did not arrive at the school-house. No doubt at first little anxiety was felt at their absence; hunger would fetch the truants home at night. But night, which, the old Gaelic proverb says, brings all creatures home, failed to bring them, and then search was made. A couple of miles or so away by a lonely lochan there is a tiny pool, not bigger than a very small room, fringed with rushes and heather, holding a water-lily or two in the summer. This was the death-place of the children; their peats were lying on its edge, and their bodies were found below its dull waters. One of the poor little truants had a brother who lived to be a very old man, and who died last year, and so the school-boy and the weary worker have met again. We can fancy the search and the suspense, the agony of the parents when they knew the worst. Now the story is half forgotten; the old man lived near the pool and must have passed it thousands of times; probably he even, after a while, would go heedlessly by it, on his way to cut peats or to fish; his mind would be careless of what took place there so long ago. It is well that it should be so. What a dreadful world this would be if old sorrows were always present and their keen edge never dulled!

It is many years since the last lesson was given in that quiet place, since the last excuse was offered, since the last rebuke and punishment (which seemed so weighty and terrible to the offender) was dealt out, and the master set his face to the eastward, and left his house, to return to it on no to-morrow. Some round stones above ground, and perhaps a few bits of slate pencil below, are all that are left to tell that this was once a school. The grouse sit and crow on the hillocks round, and shy rabbits scuttle about in the little burn just below, without any fear of being hunted into their holes, as their great, great—ever so many great grand-fathers used to be.

Such a place would seem inexpressibly dreary to a south-country scholar, who travels a good road to the massive building where he receives the rudiments of knowledge, but nothing of this kind was felt by these hill-children who merely exchanged the moor-surrounded school-house for the moor-surrounded home. Now as the one has gone, so has the other. The fallen walls, the nettles in what used to be the kail-yard (which ever accompany man in this world and often long outlive him), the high raised ridges which show where he used to plough, perhaps an old weary-looking apple-tree, point out where the people used to live.

It is curious to think what journeys these children made when they grew up. They were no stay-at-homes. While the sky-line of the mountains

round were generally the boundaries of known country to the women, the menfolk went out far abroad. These lonely dwellings, hid among the great moors of the north and west of Scotland, were the starting-points for every quarter of the globe. The bones of their old possessors lie in Egypt and North America and India; they lie very thick in Portugal, and on the rich plains round Waterloo. A great number of the men went into the army, either following the lead of their chief, or impelled by a fighting instinct; they became soldiers, and they won honour in every continent in the days when "the springing valour" of British troops was a by-word over all the world. They were a deep-lunged sinewy-limbed people, used to hard rough work on their mountains, accustomed to all kinds of weather, and inured to every sort of exposure; and so work which would kill outright a modern recruit was child's play to them. They formed no small part of that "astonishing infantry" about which we read in Napier's great book; with their English and Irish brethren they showed everywhere, to all who stood up against them, "with what a strength and majesty" the British soldier fights. The bare topped mountains on the Bidassoa, and the sharp whiff of burning turf which would greet him now and then in the Low Countries, must often have reminded a man of his home far away in the north, and of the little smoky hut in which his wife and children lived. In time he would go back to them, if he passed safely through the risks of war and disease. Professor Wilson in one of his essays draws a fine picture of the sergeant of the Black Watch, who after his thirty years' service—imagine any one serving for thirty years now!—went back to end his days in his own country. The change must have been a very curious one. For the din and racket of years spent in camps the quiet monotony of a glen in Sutherland or Argyllshire; while busy in the little bit of out-field, or watching the sheep on the hill, to think of the days when it was at Fuentes Onoro, or at Albuera, or in the fiery breach at Badajos, that the work had to be done!

It is often said that there is no loneliness so intense as that which is felt by a stranger alone in a great town. That is the sad loneliness of desolation such as, in a yet more painful form, would be experienced by one lost in a great forest or adrift in a small boat at sea. Some people feel a touch of this when travelling in the higher part of the Alps. Every one has been in a country church on an autumn day, and listened to a sermon on the decay of Nature, the fall of the leaf; but a far more impressive text might be taken from her aspect in these high regions. Everything about a man then, if he is in the mood for it, reminds him of destruction. The ice he is walking on is melting away before his eyes; hundreds of tiny rivulets are hurrying over its surface, cutting small channels in it, and gradually collecting into a respectable stream which at length disappears down a huge ice-shaft—a *moulin*. In Mr. Morris's *Sigurd the Volsung* are some lines which well describe such a district.

> Daylong he fared through the mountains and that highway's Fashioner
> Forsooth was an awful craftsman; and his hands the waters were;
> And the heaped up ice was his mattock, and the fire-blast was his man;
> And never a whit he heeded though his walls were waste and wan.

All the cliffs round are weather-beaten and blasted by storm, and they too are gradually suffering decomposition. From time to time a huge rock leaves its resting place, and thunders down into some lonely valley where its fall can do but little harm. One grows accustomed to this sound on all rock mountains; on the faces of the Matterhorn there is an almost continuous roar of falling stones, hardly ever ceasing by day or by night. The decay of autumn leaves merely means that nutriment for another season is

being stored up; but this roar means destruction; no "following spring" can remedy what is taking place here. It has been well said that while a snow mountain *may* through very cold summers and hard winters grow higher, a rock mountain *must* yearly, weekly, even hourly, get less. And death too is sometimes before the traveller in bodily shape. Hundreds of butterflies and bees are often lying on the snow; I have seen single ones as high as fourteen thousand feet; they get into currents of air, and are carried from the temperate regions higher and higher till they become bewildered, and are unable to escape their fate. So long as the sun is up they live; when he sinks and the frost sets in—and in these regions the latter often begins at sun-down—they settle on the snow, and die.

It is not often perhaps that an Alpine climber troubles himself with reflections such as these. He is generally far too busy striving in his happy labour, too keen and hopeful, to admit what is sad or foreboding into his mind. But still there are times,—a slight sprain to the ankle, or a chill are conducive to them—when such thoughts will inevitably press upon him.

As a rule the signs of man's presence in old days, marks which show that he has lived and done his work and then disappeared, add to the loneliness of a place; and perhaps this is one reason why the sense of solitude is hardly so much felt in the higher parts of Switzerland as among the Scotch hills. Then too no man has ever stood on the top of the Matterhorn, or the Meije, or the Aguille de Dru, and looked at the mighty array of great peaks which stand up all around by himself. From some of the highest mountains you can see man's works, green pastures, and forests, and collections of *chalets*. From others the eye travels from one wild jagged peak to another, from one huge field of broken-up ice to another, from one black savage mass of rock to another, and sees nothing else to rest on. Up the highest of these mountains a thin line of exploration has been carried, but on the majority no one has ever set a foot; they have kept their proud virginity untouched since the beginning of time. This is solitude, but it has nothing in touch with what Wordsworth meant when he spoke of

> The sleep that is among the lonely hills.

It is not very easy in these days to get completely away from the outward and visible signs of civilisation, but the lover of old-world life and habits has been able to comfort himself with the thought that there were some districts so remote, so desolate, so useless, that it seemed little likely that they would in his time at any rate be invaded by steam or electricity. Such a one must have received a severe shock of late. If there was any one place in Great Britain which might have been considered safe from the intrusion of the conveniences of the nineteenth century, guarded by its inaccessibility and barrenness from the attack of engineers and contractors, it was the moor of Rannoch; that great tract of desolate country which lies between the loch of that name and the head waters of the Orchy; a district with few sheep on it and little game, a veritable blasted heath. The Ettrick Shepherd, or rather Christopher North for him, gives a vivid account of crossing over it one hot dry summer day. "I was crossing frae Loch Ericht fit to the heid o' Glenorchy, and got in among the hags that for leagues and leagues a' round that dismal region seemed houked out o' the black moss by demons doomed to dreary day-dargs for their sins in the wilderness. There was naething for't but loup—loup—louping out o' a pit intil anither—hour after hour, till, sair forfeuchan, I feenally gied myself up for lost. Drought had sooked up the pools and left their cracked bottoms barkened in the heat; the heather was sliddery as ice, aneath that torrid zone; sic a sun! no ae clud in the sky, glitterin'

in wirewove sultriness! the howe o' the lift was like a great caudron pabblin' into the boil ower a slow fire!" There is something wonderfully realistic in the last simile, as any one who has been on a moor in such a day can tell. The moor of Rannoch is a place little known, sportsmen rarely visit it, just a chance tourist may sometimes cross it, as the Shepherd did. Still somehow one liked to think that there it was, a really wild region, a place where a man might speedily lose himself if he did not mind what he was about.

And now a railway is to be made right through it! In a few months it will be cut by a thin line of steel, which will run in an unbroken stretch to Euston Square! Harriet and her young man, leaving London at eight at night, will pass into it about twelve the next day; they will be able to throw the orange peel out of their carriage into the wildest part of Great Britain. "Change here for Loch Lydoch!" After this what is impossible or what is safe?

A hundred years ago a man of some note and repute was living in the Black Mount; he was a stalker there in the service of Breadalbane, and by his own right he was a poet. He lies in the Grey Friars burying-ground in Edinburgh, but his monument stands up on a high knoll near Dalmally, to be seen far and wide. What would old Duncan Ban MacIntyre have thought, if he had lived in these days, and seen the railway cutting which runs round the base of his beloved Bein-Dorain, fencing off that ground from the rest of the forest?

Dark is the green of his grassy clothing,
Soft swell thy hillocks most green and deep;
The cannaeh blowing, the darnel growing,
Whilst the deer troops past to the misty steep.

It is interesting to think of the energy and skill which have made, or rather are making, the new line, and yet a walk up from Tyndrum to the bridge of Orchy is not so pleasant now as it used to be. The once lonely roadside is dotted with huts; provision-carts are flying back and forwards; huge steam-engines drag their weary way up the dusty hills, and the old boots, and broken bottles, and battered cans, which ever mark the progress of civilisation in this world, are plentifully strewed about. Some nine miles north-east of Loch Tulla, going partly by the old military Kingshouse road and partly by the hill, there lies a little tarn called Loch Ba. There is indeed a chain of small lochs here, stretching over towards the moor of Rannoch. The great Corrieba (or Corrichibah, as Scrope spells it) lies a little to the left, before turning off the road to the lochan.

Perhaps there is no single person above six years old in the British Isles who has not seen in some form or another — in a hundred guinea artist's proof, or on the top of a coal-scuttle—Landseer's Stag at Bay. It was down from Corrieba that this stag came; the great beast got out of a drive, deer-hounds were slipped after him, and he came down into the loch and stood at bay there. This took place, I believe, before Landseer's time, but the story was told the great artist, and it was easy for him in the noble forest to find his model and his rocks. And it was perhaps about this very place, as the Black Book of Taymouth relates (I am still quoting from Scrope) that "Upon the thettene day of Febuary, anno 1622, the King's Majesty send John Skandebar, Englishman, with other twa Englishmen in his company, to see ane quhyt hynd that was in Corrichibah, upon the 22 day of Febuary, anno 1622." There seems surely some confusion of dates here. I wonder if Mr. John Skandebar, Englishman, was successful in his search, and if the worthy sightseer was the last of his race; I do not remember anywhere else to have come across his name.

Here then, on a broiling day in this last June, I sat on an island in Loch Ba. It was little trouble to capture the trout there; in a deer forest the creatures are generally somewhat unsophisticated, and in two days my companion and I extracted some three hundred. Not very big are these trout, but game and red fleshed, as trout should be which have such a fair expanse of dense weeds to sit in and feed among as they have here. Far away somewhere in the Rannoch country, was a big fire, we saw the smoke before midday, and late at night it was still rising up into the clear sky; by the early morning it had travelled up to Loch Tulla, and filled up the glen there. Lazily we watched it from time to time, wondering if it was heather that was burning, not surely the old black native wood on Loch Rannoch. This was the way the Shepherd came on that blazing day, stumbling over the peat hags, sliddering down the dry heather slopes, with his tongue out (we can fancy him!) like a thirsty dog, the only living human being on the great waste. He would have found plenty of company that day. Far away the new line of works was visible; the hacking and hewing and blasting, the sweat and toil of the last six months, were beginning to show. Telegraph-poles were being raised,—the telephone runs now up to the Bridge of Orchy. Fancy being able to speak from that picturesque place to Glasgow! It seems to us almost more wonderful than communicating with China from London —engines were puffing, engineers were prowling about, here, there, everywhere.

In a little while the railway will be finished; the cranes will be carried off, and the barrows and all the plant—the contractors will surely never try to sell them up here! The sturdy navvies,—a decent lot of men, though we did find some of them playing a popular game of cards in the middle of the road—will betake themselves, and their picks and shovels, and immense capacity for drink, elsewhere. Nature will hide the ugly cuttings (very, very slowly where they are steep) in her green and purple coverings; the old boots will rot, snowed over and blown on in winter, bleached in summer—they cannot last for ever; the thousands of fragments of bottles will, —but no, *they* will remain, no weather will affect them; in a hundred years, in a thousand years,—may we not say in a million years?—those bits of glass will be dug out of the rubbish which protects them, and bear witness, long after all trace of railway has vanished, to the thirstiness of the men of old times. The best and heaviest steel rail has no enduring life in it when compared to a square inch of glass. The railway will be made, the deer will become used to the strange snorting and the white puffs of smoke, but it will bring another danger with it, and one more fatal to them.

I shall certainly not be allowed space here to go into the Access to Moor and Mountains Bill, but I beg leave in the last page or two of this paper for a little room to explain what it is that the red deer objects to in the tourist, the botanist, or the geologist. It is not so much his appearance, his cheerful and ruddy countenance, his *puggaree*, or even the tapping of his hammer. It is his smell. When deer see a man they are not necessarily always alarmed. They go on feeding, but they watch him; if he keeps within their sight,—at a reasonable distance, a good many rifle shots away, they will not shift their ground. But if he gets out of their sight, into a hole or hollow, or a burn, then they will probably move to some place where they have a better view of him, and if he appears wriggling, and crawling and creeping like a serpent, they will make their adieus to him, without any foolish hurry,—with dignity they will go away, keeping still an eye on him. All this will be if the gentleman is to leeward.

Now imagine a forest within a reasonable distance of a large town, as near as Arran is to Glasgow; though

we will not take Arran as an example, because it belongs to a great nobleman whom it would be pleasant to many people to speak ill of. Our forest is of much smaller dimensions than that island or the Black Mount, and it does not, like them, form only a small part of great possessions.

Two or three score of years ago a worthy man in business in the south (it does not matter here whether he was a lawyer or a grocer or a farmer) made a little money. Those of his friends and neighbours who had been equally fortunate put out their savings in various ways,—into railways, into banks, into land in Somerset, into shops in Liverpool. If they made wise investments they got good interest for it, at any rate no one came to them to take away their capital; if it was thought necessary for the public good that a railway should be run through their land, or that their shops should be pulled down to make room for docks, they were paid well,—as a rule paid extravagantly—for the sale that was forced upon them. The first man, thinking no evil, wishing no harm to any one, trusting to the equity of the law, buys a forest. No one told him that he did a foolish thing, no one complained of his conduct. He spends a good deal of money on his possessions, he fences some part for sheep, he employs a good many hands in draining and building and planting, and so on; and when in the evening of his life he pants up to the top of a hill and surveys his territory, an ineffable feeling of contentment steals over him; he has laid up something for his son. In due time the good old farmer, or grocer, dies, and the forest passes into the hands of the second generation. He too loves the place; it is his all, his ewe lamb; other men may divide their affections over half a dozen estates, his is concentrated on the one. He lets it as a rule, but he is able to spend the spring and early summer on it, now and then he may get a little stalking on it himself. And then suddenly flashes into his ken a dreadful man who, possessed of no forest of his own, demands that all moor and mountain shall be made free!

For their protection deer have been given a most delicate sense of smell. They will wind a geologist a mile away; and that he is out of their sight, hammering away in a hole at an Orthoceratite, will not lessen, but greatly increase, their fears. They become terribly afraid then, when they smell an abominable smell and cannot see what is the cause of it. Very awful must be the scent which we, the most delicate and scrupulously clean of us, carry about, and no one but a stalker knows how far it will carry, and how long it will last on the ground. We have seen deer, late on an October evening, hesitating to cross the line made early in the day on a high bleak stony upland, and that too when the weather was wild and stormy with showers of hail flying about. When they got within a few yards of the line they smelt the footsteps, and jumped back, coming on again suspiciously, and sniffing the ground.

In his poem called *Donald*, Mr. Browning has related how on a path too narrow to turn on a man meets a stag. The man lies down full length; the stag, who also grasps the situation, passes "light as a feather whisk" over him. Then the ungrateful man stabs the poor beast in the stomach just when it is passing, and deservedly breaks every bone in his body, except his neck, by the fall he gets. A place where a man can lie down at full length is surely wide enough to turn in, but this is not the point of the dramatic sketch I want to touch on. I feel sure that any experienced forester in Scotland would back me in saying that no stag out of a book would do this. Though the precipice were as deep as is the top of Everest from the sea, I do not believe that any stag would consider that, would care for that, any more than a wounded tiger, springing out of a patch of jungle, would debate whether the man he launched himself at had another cart-

ridge in his rifle or not. No danger can be so great that a wild red deer will not choose to face it rather than a man. He will break his neck at an impossible jump, he will beat his brains out at a fence in trying to get away; but if he *is* brought to a stand, fairly cornered as Donald's deer was, it would be with no deliberate thoughtful movement, with "no new sense created," with no care for the drop below, that he would go at his enemy.

And it was not as if our typical geologist would alarm merely those first deer. They will move on if the glen or place they are in is smooth bare ground, they will be seen by other deer, who will join them, or at any rate move on too,—the fear is quickly communicated. These again in their turn will shift others, and so the two or three hinds, which this most worthy but entirely offensive man of science has disturbed, will often be the means by which a vast stretch of ground is quite cleared; if the wind is blowing from a certain quarter they may go on and on, and leave the forest altogether, not returning till it changes, perhaps for weeks. If one man can do this, and any one used to deer and their ways will tell you that he can—what would ten men do, what the hundred that might easily on a pleasant summer day be poured into the place by an obliging railway company? They will soon ruin the forest, for no sane man will pay rent for it; and in doing this they will ruin the owner thereof, if, as Mr. Bryce says, he is to receive no compensation for his loss.

It has probably often struck those who walk across a moor what an enormous waste of sweet pure air is there. It is possible that some day engineering skill will be equal to pumping it through immense tubes into crowded towns, driving it through foul alleys, and giving even the most fetid dens a taste of its freshness. If the air cannot be brought to the people, it is good that the people should be brought to the air. That there will be many deer forests in existence in another fifty years is perhaps unlikely; when they become really wanted as playgrounds for the people they will have to go. But if, as Mr. Bryce asserts, a nation is to be so enormously benefited by acquiring them, or rather acquiring the right to use them without any of the little drawbacks of paying taxes for them, and keeping them up—then surely the nation can afford to pay for them. If in order to benefit a hundred people it is absolutely necessary to ruin one man, or seriously injure him, the necessity would be a deplorable one, though some would say that the ruin or the injury ought to be done. But there is no need of that here; we do not as a rule expect to get anything for nothing—anything that is worth having, that is to say.

And where would this line of argument stop? Every country-place, every gentleman's park, would be of more general utility if it was made a common afternoon's lounge for his neighbours. Nay, even Mr. Bryce himself, though he is possibly not able to confer equal benefits on humanity with the owners of Chatsworth or Knowle, or Taymouth, can yet do something. His garden and drawing-room would give a greater amount of satisfaction to a larger number of people if six times a week his poorer neighbours were allowed to spend their day there. I have no doubt that if this was pleasantly pointed out to Mr. Bryce that he would be willing to give up this much of his privacy for the general good. But I am equally sure he would expect to be well paid for his devotion.

GILFRID W. HARTLEY.

THE POETRY OF COMMON-SENSE.

CHARLES KINGSLEY, in one of his vigorous essays, speaks mournfully of the time "when Pope and plain sense went out, and Shelley and the seventh heaven came in." The tone of complaint seems at the first blush somewhat unreasonable, for the coming in of the seventh heaven is surely a desirable event in a world where a heaven of lower rank is not always very easily discernible. Celestial qualities either in life or in literature must needs be valuable; but, like more commonplace valuables, they offer a strong temptation to counterfeiting experts, and it is better to have in one's pocket an honest bronze penny than a pinchbeck sovereign. It can hardly be doubted by anybody that a good deal of pinchbeck coin is at present in circulation. Pope's bronze of plain sense may be described in Kantian phraseology as the wisdom of the Understanding, born of commonplace observation and reflection; the celestial auriferous-looking coinage, now in greater favour, is supposed to be the wisdom of that higher Reason which comes of direct vision—vision that is free from the tiresome necessity of explaining and justifying its own processes. But, as the poet remarks, "things are not what they seem,"—at least not always. Wilful and perverse whimsicality is occasionally presented to us as the precious harvest of "insight," and the false meaning or no-meaning of this Brummagem insight is judiciously veiled by a style to which, because it is generally deficient in lucidity and not infrequently in grammar, we award such praise as is conveyed by one or other of the fashionable terms of eulogy. It is a fact that the expression of the highest truth,—the truth of Reason—may sometimes look like nonsense when surveyed from the lower plane of the Understanding; but the study of much contemporary literature, especially in the domains of poetry and criticism, tends to convince the student that in the creed of the modern young man of letters the fact is stated conversely, thus: "Whatever is apparently nonsense must be accepted as the highest truth."

Of course we are not left without writers who can think clearly and strongly, and who can clothe their thoughts in a well-fitting and graceful vesture of language which renders adequately its every outline; but it can hardly be said that the work of these writers represents the mass of our current literature in the same way that the work of such men as Pope and Johnson represented the current literature of their century. Pope and Johnson stood above the crowd in virtue of qualities which were incommunicable; but they and the crowd had a common standard of excellence, and if this standard were not the highest, it was at any rate better than no standard at all. Correctness in following models approved by a general agreement of cultivated opinion may not be the noblest literary virtue; but it is a virtue which betokens a state of intellectual civilisation, because it is an acknowledgment of a central authority; whereas, on the other hand, the dethronement of what is understood to be correctness in favour of a so-called originality,—the divine right to say anything anyhow—is not an advance but a distinct retrogression, a lapse from civilisation into anarchy.

Kingsley, in making his point, had recourse to "apt alliteration's artful aid," a rhetorical expedient employed by other point-makers before and since

his time; but in his epigrammatic utterance sound which strikes, and significance which satisfies, fit each other more closely and neatly than usual. Shelley is really the best representative of the poetry of a cloud-wrapped, invisible, seventh heaven, the poetry of "the desire of the moth for the star," of an attempt at the expression of the inexpressible, the attainment of the unattainable. Pope is not less truly a typical poet of plain sense, content with the imaginative sustenance and emotional stimulation of the familiar harvest of earth's cornfields and vineyards which yields wholesome flour to his flail and wine to his press. Wherever one opens his pages one finds some final literary embodiment of what has been described as the wisdom of the Understanding; but a very just appreciation of the kind and quality of his work as an imaginative exponent of this wisdom may be arrived at without straying beyond those two very characteristic poems, the *Essay on Man* and the *Essay on Criticism*.

One feels specially with regard to the former poem what one so often feels with regard to some real or supposed masterpiece of literature,—how interesting it would be to read for the first time without having previously read one of the many words written by the critics concerning it. It has been urged by writers of the rank of De Quincey, Mr. Leslie Stephen, and Mr. Lowell, that its thought is borrowed from Bolingbroke; that the philosophical system expounded in it lacks unity, and that one position is, indeed, inconsistent with another; that it is illogical, shallow, ill-digested, and I know not what besides. Now all these charges are more or less true, and if but one of them were true the *Essay on Man* would be deprived of claims to honour as a systematic philosophical statement. But this is just what it is not,—just what it cannot be, unless it is to abandon all right to be considered a poem. Pope's poetry is the poetry of the Understanding; but an orderly logical essay on Man, with all its parts so well and calmly thought out in relation to each other that there should be no inconsistency or flow in the chain of reasoning, would be the mere prose of the Understanding. We are easily misled by names, and the essay being a recognised prose form, we yield to the temptation to judge by prose canons any composition bearing that name. Perhaps there is no fact which tells so much in favour of an affirmative answer to the old question of the debating-society, "Was Pope a poet?" than his obvious inability to produce metrical work which, when judged by these canons, is at all satisfactory. The *Essay on Man* is not an essay at all, in so far as that term involves logical as well as literary continuity; it is really a collection of short reflective and epigrammatic poems, the welding together of which into a larger poem,—with an apparent rather than a real unity—is mechanical, not vital. Thus, in the *Essay on Man* the parts are greater than the whole; and Pope, as represented by this and similar works, is one of the few poets to whom no injustice, but rather the fullest justice, is done by the process of reproduction in what used to be called Elegant Extracts.

Of the single lines which, in becoming popular proverbial expressions, have received the world's testimonial to their penetrating truth of thought and final perfectness of expression it is needless to speak, though it may be remarked that their combination of compactness with clearness is, broadly speaking, unknown to the literature of our own day, and, if we may judge from what we read, is not even regarded as a desirable ideal. Of the longer detachable passages which are, in a manner, complete in themselves, and which I have ventured to speak of as poems, it has been said again and again that the thought in them is

trite and obvious. It would be foolhardy to affirm that this is never the case; but, even when it is so, it must be remembered that the world owes a debt of gratitude not merely to the man who provides what are called new ideas, but to him who crystallises old thought, with which in solution people have long been familiar, into some enduring jewel of language. There is always something admirable and deserving in literature instinct with that quality of which Pope wrote the memorable couplet:

> True wit is nature to advantage dressed,
> What oft was thought but ne'er so well expressed.

It may, however, be questioned whether Pope's intellectual substance is really so thin as it is often assumed to be. The master of utterance has the power of so presenting a new or profound thought that we appropriate it at once, and the appropriation is so effortless that we are tempted to believe it has always been ours,—that because we see it so clearly now, we have always seen it with equal clearness. On the other hand, the thought which we take home with difficulty acquires a factitious value from the labour spent in its acquisition, for it is not in human nature to prize lightly what it has cost so much to win. I would not even seem to depreciate the noble work of Robert Browning; but I think any fair-minded admirer will admit that an important element in his estimate of the poet's thought is his consciousness that he has made it his own by working for it, and that if he had not worked for it, it could never have been his.

And this mention of Browning tempts me to note the fact that one of his most striking central ideas was really anticipated, and anticipated not vaguely and tentatively but with singular force and distinctness, by the poet with whom he seems to have so little in common. The idea as it appears in numerous poems of Browning may be briefly stated thus: Man is a being created for two lives, a finite life and an infinite life, and if he will live wisely he will neither ignore the latter in the enjoyment of the former, nor commit the opposite error of attempting to snatch at the fulness of the infinite life while yet subject to the bonds of the finite,—to "crowd into time eternity's concern." This is the thought which pervades with weighty warning such poems as *Paracelsus*, *Sordello*, and *Easter-Day*,—with stimulating appeal such other poems as *A Grammarian's Funeral* and *Rabbi Ben Ezra*; it is indeed one of the most frequent of Browning's germinal ideas, and is often referred to as something peculiarly his own. He has, doubtless, largely made it so by characteristic treatment; but in another form, less impressive indeed but more sharply outlined than the dramatic, it is certainly present in the *Essay on Man*. After an argument which may be left to the tender mercies of the logical critics, Pope arrives at the conclusion that in the universe of being,

> 'tis plain,
> There must be, somewhere, such a rank as Man:
> And all the question (wrangle e'er so long)
> Is only this, if God has placed him wrong?

To this question Pope's optimistic theism can give but one reply, and it is in the course of this reply,—from which a few passages must be quoted—that he unfolds the thought of man's limitations and possibilities.

> Then say not Man's imperfect, Heav'n in fault;
> Say rather, Man's as perfect as he ought:
> His knowledge measured to his state and place,
> His time a moment, and a point his space.
> If to be perfect in a certain sphere,
> What matter, soon or late, or here or there.
> . . . . . .
> In Pride, in reas'ning Pride, our error lies;
> All quit their sphere, and rush into the skies.
> Pride still is aiming at the blest abodes,
> Men would be Angels, Angels would be Gods.
> . . . . . .

The bliss of Man (could Pride that blessing find),
Is not to act or think beyond mankind;
No pow'rs of body or of soul to share,
But what his nature and his state can bear.

It is needless to adduce parallels, but it will be seen that the thought of Pope is really one with the thought of Browning; and if its expression by the earlier poet seem less impressive than that of our own contemporary, the comparative lack of impressiveness is to be found, not in the thought itself but, in the form of expression which has become to us old-fashioned, flat, and destitute of its primal charm.

What Pope has to say concerning the relation of passion to conduct is hardly less noteworthy. The passions, uncontrolled by reason or conscience, have forced so many men into folly or vice or crime that the first thought of the average man is to regard them as necessarily enemies of virtue, and the reasoning, restraining faculties as necessarily its allies. This was certainly the ordinary view of the eighteenth century, its moral ideal being the conception of a man whose passions were always held in subjection. It is, indeed, the ordinary view even yet, and many a man and woman of to-day has felt the delightful shock of a new and illuminating truth in reading the words of Professor Seeley,—"No heart is pure that is not passionate; no virtue is safe that is not enthusiastic,"—or those other words of Rabbi Ben Ezra,

Let us not always say
Spite of this flesh to-day
"I strove, made head, gained ground upon the whole!"
As the bird wings and sings,
Let us cry, "All good things
Are ours, nor soul helps flesh more now than flesh helps soul."

How fresh this seems,—how full of the sweet sharp breath of the new day! but here, too, Pope after his own fashion has been first in the field. To him the fixity of virtue boasted of by the mere stoic is but a fixity like that of frost. "Strength of mind," he says, "is exercise not rest," and while on the ocean of life over which we are all sailing reason is the card which guides, passion is the gale which sends the ship bounding over the billows to the haven where she would be.

Nor God alone in the still calm we find,
He mounts the storm, and walks upon the wind.

Every one knows the passage which sets forth and illustrates Pope's theory of a ruling passion as a motive power of conduct; and it is this passion to which he refers in the lines which, it will be seen, bear a curious resemblance, not merely in thought but in phraseology, to the passages quoted from Professor Seeley and Browning.

Th' Eternal Art, educing good from ill,
Grafts on this Passion our best principle:
'Tis thus the Mercury of Man is fixed,
Strong grows the Virtue with his nature mix'd;
The dross cements what else were too refin'd,
And *in one interest body acts with mind.*
As fruits, ungrateful to the planter's care,
On savage stocks inserted, learn to bear;
The surest Virtues thus from Passions shoot,
Wild Nature's vigour working at the root.

There is no need to press Pope's claims too vehemently, or to urge them with exaggeration of emphasis; but surely it is bare justice to say that those who accuse him of merely superficial thinking raise a suspicion that they themselves have been guilty of hasty and careless reading. Nor can they justify their charge by the plea that Pope simply versified the thought of Bolingbroke. What is the explanation of the fact that to-day, though Pope is not read as he ought to be read, the readers of the *Essay on Man* are numbered by thousands, while readers of Bolingbroke,—one of the most brilliant writers of English prose—are numbered by units? No explanation is possible but this,—that Pope, though he may not have originated the intellectual substance of the *Essay* has given to it the finally satisfying expression; and this he could not have done by merely translating it from prose into

verse, but only by thinking it, as it were, over again, for no one can rightly utter the thought that he has not made his own.

There was no Bolingbroke behind the *Essay on Criticism*, but it is not less rich than the *Essay on Man* in the ripe fruit of plain sense, the unpretentious but practical wisdom of the Understanding. Open the poem almost anywhere, and we see how Pope goes straight to the heart of the matter in hand, how he says just the true thing in the best possible way, and therefore the final way. No question, for example, has been more fiercely discussed than this,—Is Art to be judged by the measure of its truth to Nature as Nature is observed by the individual artist, or by the measure of its conformity to certain traditions of fitness which long *prestige* has rendered classical? We should expect Pope to take his cue from the conventional spirit of his age which was dominated by Renaissance influences; but as a matter of fact his verdict is in favour both of the direct study of Nature and of loyalty to classical traditions of Art, because he sees that the two are really one.

First follow Nature, and your judgment frame
By her just standard, which is still the same:
Unerring NATURE, still divinely bright,
One clear, unchanged, and universal light,
Life, force, and beauty must to all impart,
At once the source, and end, and test of Art.

"Nature the source and end and test of Art" might have served as a motto for the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, a justification for all their eccentricities and rebellions. But Pope would not have been a Pre-Raphaelite, for this is not his last word.

Those RULES of old discover'd, not devised,
Are Nature still, but Nature methodiz'd;
Nature, like liberty, is but restrain'd
By the same laws which first herself ordain'd.
. . . . .
When first young Maro in his boundless mind
A work t' outlast immortal Rome design'd,
Perhaps he seem'd above the critic's law,
And but from Nature's fountains scorn'd to draw:
But when t' examine every part he came,
Nature and Homer were, he found, the same.

These rules, these great examples, must, however, be to the poet (for it is the poet of whom Pope is mainly writing) as guide-posts, indicating generally the way he should go; not as walls compelling him to tread undeviatingly the beaten track. Those are graces which no methods can teach, because they come not by foresight but by fortune; lucky licences which disown authority but which, in virtue of their success, become authorities themselves; glorious offences of "great wits" who

From vulgar bounds with grave disorder part,
And snatch a grace beyond the reach of art,
Which, without passing thro' the judgment, gains
The heart, and all its end at once attains.

This is really as profound as it is pellucid; not one whit less profound in its way than the illuminating words of Polixenes in *The Winter's Tale*,—

Yet nature is made better by no mean
But nature makes that mean; so, o'er that art
Which you say adds to nature, is an art
That nature makes.
This is an art
Which does mend nature, change it rather, but
The art itself is nature.

In both passages we see common sense at its highest,—the wisdom of the Understanding which discriminates and compares, rising into the wisdom of the Reason which sees. Even, however, when it remains on its lower levels among the most familiar simplicities of observation or reflection, it always leaves behind it the satisfaction given by adequacy of accomplishment. Indeed it is not distinguished from

other poetry by choice of theme or even in the strict sense of the word by treatment of theme; it is poetry which is found wherever the poet,—be his matter or manner what it may—estimates fairly the possibilities of expression existing in himself, and the possibilities of being expressed which exist in his subject.

Kingsley thought of Pope as pre-eminently the poet of plain sense, and Dryden, Johnson, Goldsmith, Crabbe, and Cowper, whose manner is in varying degrees akin to Pope's are not less entitled to the designation; but the fact that these men belong to one literary school may easily betray the unwary into a specious error of intellectual grouping. They represent what is called, perhaps not very accurately, the classical manner of feeling and handling; whereas Shelley and his school represent the manner which is known as romantic; but the controversy between the adherents of "plain sense" and the devotees of the "seventh heaven" is not one with the weary and interminable controversy between classicism and romanticism. The questions to be asked before deciding whether a writer belongs to the sensible or pseudo-celestial order of poets are not, "Does he write in the trim couplets of Pope, or in the bounding lyrical manner of Shelley?" "Does he celebrate Nature conventionalised or Nature free?" "Is his philosophy the philosophy of pedestrian empiricism or of soaring transcendentalism?" but, "Have his conceptions, be they lofty or lowly, the coherent sanity of substance which alone lends itself to clear presentation in a satisfying artistic form?" and "Are such conceptions within or beyond his reach; does he dominate them or is he dominated by them?" Matthew Arnold has observed that Keats *renders* Nature, while Shelley *tries to render* her. With the truth of the special criticism I have no immediate concern; but the words are cited because they indicate with such clear conciseness the essential difference between two classes of poetic craftsmen. It is this perfection of rendering,—whether of nature or of human life, of thought, sentiment, or emotion—which makes such a term as "poet of plain sense" a term of absolute praise, instead of being like classical or romantic, subjective or objective, an epithet which may be used either by way of eulogy or of reproach. Mr. W. M. Rossetti, for example, depreciates Coleridge's *Ancient Mariner* on the ground that he finds it "defective in the core of common sense," and while the finding may possibly be questioned, every judicious reader will feel that if it be admitted the verdict of depreciation based upon it is perfectly just; for by deficiency in common sense the writer means a lack of that organic coherence of substance which is as essential to the conviction of the imagination as is sound logic to the conviction of the reason. Such a lack is not merely a defect from this or that point of view, it is a defect from any point of view,—a fault in itself.

The opposite merit is to be found not only in the classical didactics of Pope, Dryden, and the earlier Georgians, but in the romantic narrative and descriptive poetry of Byron and Scott; it is not wanting in the meditatively observant work of Wordsworth. It is not necessary in order to praise the poetry of common sense consistently, that we should prefer the work of the eighteenth century to that of the men who are nearer to our own time,—work which necessarily comes home to us because it speaks our own thought in our own dialect. When Kingsley spoke of the dominating quality of Pope's verse as having gone out, he meant that it had gone out of fashion, not that it had gone out of existence, for a cardinal intellectual virtue does not perish with the men of any generation;—"the poetry of *sense*," to adapt a line of Keats, "is never dead." Just at present, more's the pity, Byron and Scott are largely sharing the fate of

Pope—they have gone out; and we have been told again and again that their loss of vogue is due to the absence from their work of a certain exquisiteness of apprehension, a subtility of sensation, a mastery of complexities of *technique*, of all those vague virtues of conception and treatment which are summed up in the one blessed word "distinction." These things are certainly not to be discerned in *Childe Harold* or *The Lady of the Lake*, but one has a shrewd suspicion that what is found amiss in these poems by the noisiest class of contemporary connisseurs is not the absence of something, but the presence of something else,—of that fine manly robustness, that sturdy directness, that simple instinctive swiftness of touch which embodies a clear and vivid conception in a perfectly representative literary form that stands a silent reproach to the ineffective prettiness, the oracular obscurity, and the convulsive strain of the verse which, because it can never touch or move the normally constituted human being, is, on the principle of *lucus a non lucendo*, spoken of as "intimate."

This intimacy is supposed to be specially manifest in the treatment of Nature by contemporary poets of the seventh heaven, and in their verse Nature is certainly exploited as she has never been exploited before. She has become a Diana pursued to her most private haunts by a literary Actæon with note-book in hand; but the notes that he makes give one the impression of being the jottings of an eaves-dropper, not the confidences of a favoured lover. Even in Pope's *Windsor Forest*, with all its conventional phraseology, one is conscious of a simple, more instructive, and therefore more genuine enjoyment of Nature than is to be found in the work of certain living poets, who have, indeed, abjured convention for cram. Where, now, it may be asked, save here and there in the work of poets like Lord Tennyson, Browning, and Matthew Arnold do we read poetry which brings us into such veritable touch with the life of the elements as that of which we are made conscious by the virile stanzas of Byron?

All heaven and earth are still—though not in sleep,
But breathless, as we grow when feeling most;
And silent, as we stand in thoughts too deep:
All heaven and earth are still: From the high host
Of stars, to the lull'd lake and mountain-coast,
All is concenter'd in a life intense
Where not a beam, nor air, nor leaf is lost,
But hath a part of being, and a sense
Of that which is of all Creator and defence.

. . . . .

The sky is changed!—and such a change! Oh night,
And storm, and darkness, ye are wondrous strong.
Yet lovely in your strength, as is the light
Of a dark eye in woman! Far along,
From peak to peak, the rattling crags among
Leaps the live thunder! Not from one lone cloud,
But every mountain now hath found a tongue,
And Jura answers, through her misty shroud,
Back to the joyous Alps, who call to her aloud!

Such pictorial description as this, producing its effects so simply, so swiftly, so directly, is, not less than the measured epigrammatic didacticism of Pope, the poetry of common sense; because diverse as are their indwelling spirit and their outward form, they both exhibit the calm supremacy of fulfilled accomplishment, not the contortion of ineffectual strain. We have didactic poetry now, and it is very different from the didactic poetry of Pope and Johnson, having less of glitter and more of warmth, fewer of the accents of the world, more of the inspired tone of solitary vision; but it has the same notes of clearness, simplicity, sufficingness. These are heard in Arnold's stanza,—

We cannot kindle when we will
The fire which in the heart resides;
The spirit bloweth and is still,
In mystery our soul abides.
But tasks in hours of insight will'd
Can be through hours of gloom fulfill'd.

They are heard yet again in the lines of *In Memoriam*,—

Let knowledge grow from more to more,
But more of reverence in us dwell;
That mind and soul according well
May make one music as before
But vaster.

Nor are they absent from, or inconsistent with, the poetry of a sane and reverent mysticism which inspires Wordsworth's great *Ode on the Intimations of Immortality;* for the poet of plain sense is not the poet who is distinguished from his aspiring peers by being content to dwell in the flat lowlands of thought and emotion, but by his gift of climbing without giddiness, of breathing the air of the higher summits without intoxication. The poetry of common sense is seen at its best and strongest not when imagination plods along the highway but when it stands upon the mountain top, as in the Homeric epic, the *Divine Comedy* of Dante, the human tragedy of Shakespeare, the *Paradise Lost* of Milton. In these supreme efforts we are, however, impressed more immediately and forcibly by the Titanesque power than by the sane and ordered co-ordination of its expression; so therefore, when we name the poetry of common sense, we naturally think of the poetry in which the peculiar quality stands free from the shadow of more splendid if not more essential endowments; and the name which comes to our lips will not be the name of Homer or Shakespeare; it will be some such name as that of Pope. Nor is he unworthy of the representative position. If it be urged that his substance is too familiar to be arresting, we may fairly ask, who made it familiar? whose stamp it was that gave to common metal such universal currency? The gentleman who went to see *Hamlet* for the first time said that it was "a good play but too full of quotations." We laugh at him, and half an hour afterwards we ourselves remark with a grave face that Pope's literary merits are considerable, but that his thought is trite and commonplace. Be it so. Sleep is commonplace, but Sancho Panza had the grace to bless the man who invented it. Common sense is not quite so common as it ought to be, but it is nevertheless sufficiently common to be despised by superior people. We will therefore bless the men who have made it common, and among our blessings a special benediction shall be reserved for Alexander Pope.

James Ashcroft Noble.

IN THE YEAR OF THE TERROR.

THE Centenary of the French Revolution has evoked not a few interesting memoirs and recollections, which have been now published for the first time by the descendants of those who either played leading parts in its dramas or were among its many victims. The Duchesse de Duras, whose prison memories bear the somewhat lengthy title of *Journal des Prisons de mon Père, de ma Mère et des miennes*, belonged to this latter category. True she survived the tempest and lived on amidst its after-wreckage to write down for her son this account of what had befallen her during her imprisonment, first at Chantilly, then at the Collège de Plessis in Paris, from which last place she was released in the October of 1794. But in that one year of the Terror she had outlived nearly all those relations and friends who had made life dear to her, and the free sunlight, though so welcome, shone for her as through a veil of crape. "Deliverance from my past misfortunes was sweet to me," she writes of the period of her release, "but at first I felt a disgust for everything. Accustomed to be surrounded by affection, the idea of my loneliness overwhelmed me." Her parents, the Maréchal Duc and Duchesse de Mouchy, with whom Mme. de Duras had lived up to the time of her arrest, and whose fate for good or ill she had vainly endeavoured to share at the Luxembourg, had been guillotined a few months before on June 26th, 1794. Many in that fierce day of retribution died well and bravely who had lived ill, but these two old people died as they had lived, in charity towards all men and at peace with God; and that lives which had so nearly run their earthly course should thus perish seemed perhaps less tragic than the like fate which a little later had befallen her young and much loved sister-in-law Louise de Noailles. Monsieur le Vicomte, the latter's husband, was safe in America, and she left three children to face the world orphaned and alone but for the devotion of their tutor M. Grelet, of whom more hereafter.

M. Anatole France in his *Vie Littéraire* remarks justly that "une autobiographie ne doit rien à la mode, on n'y cherche que la vérité humaine." There is a great deal of that truth to be found in Mme. de Duras' recollections. They are extremely well worth reading, in spite of what she herself calls their "platitude and negligence of style," a plain unvarnished tale of a good woman's patient endurance of wholly unmerited misfortune. Yet her experiences both of small privations and bitter sorrows do not in their narration differ materially from those of many others of that time whose memoirs have long since passed into the realm of history, and her "notes," as she calls them, only occupy about half the volume. The rest is filled by some deeply interesting documents concerning other members of her family; the narrative of Mme. Latour, a friend, who having escaped arrest herself insisted, so long as she was permitted, on sharing the imprisonment of the Duc and Duchesse de Mouchy and trying to soften the hardships of their lot, and the last letters and testament of Louise de Noailles who, with her grandmother the old Maréchale de Noailles (Marie Antoinette's Madame l'Etiquette) and her mother the Duchesse d'Ayen, was guillotined on July 22nd, 1794. Their remains shared the common lot, and were mingled with those of criminals in the cemetery of the Picpus; but Mme. de Duras was able to be one of

the first who on the restoration of the church had masses sung for their souls, and she received every detail of their last moments and death from the lips of a priest, M. Carrichon, who had run considerable risk by following the tumbrils to the place of execution, in order that concealed among the crowd of mere spectators and carefully disguised he might give the prisoners their last absolution.

His simple yet very graphic account of what he saw and did on that day so fatal in the annals of the de Noailles family, throws a painfully vivid and personal light on events with which one is already vaguely familiar. He wrote down his experiences immediately after their occurrence and they are published at the end of *Le Journal des Prisons* under the title of "The story of an eye-witness of the 22nd day of July 1794."

The old Maréchale de Noailles, her daughter-in-law the Duchesse d'Ayen, and her granddaughter the Vicomtesse de Noailles, were imprisoned together in their hotel from September 1793 to the following April. During the whole of that time M. Carrichon visited Mme. d'Ayen and her daughter once a week, and as the Terror grew with its crimes and the tale of its victims increased, these three friends exhorted each other to be prepared. And one day, with a kind of presentiment, the priest said to them, "If you go to the guillotine, and God gives me strength to do it, I will accompany you."

The two women took him at his word and begged him eagerly to then and there promise solemnly that he would render them this last service. He avows frankly that he hesitated for a moment, more clearly conscious than they could be of the frightful risk he would run and the possible uselessness of the sacrifice; and then he assented, adding that in order that they might not fail to recognize him he would wear a dark blue coat and a red waistcoat. The time for redeeming a pledge of which they often reminded him came all too soon. In April 1795, a week after Easter, the three ladies were removed to the Luxembourg and M. Carrichon's direct communication with them ceased entirely. But he continued to hear news of them through M. Grelet, the young tutor to whom Louise de Noailles had confided her three children, two boys and a girl, and whose tender faithful devotion to her and hers was the one bright spot in her fast darkening days, the last and sweetest consolation of her life. Nothing can be more beautiful and touching in the way of friendship and affection than the bond which united these two; an affection which held in it something of the sisterly and motherly element, since Mme. de Noailles by right of a very few years seniority calls him her dear child and her adopted son. Hers was a singularly sweet and noble nature. One reads that clearly in her last letters to her husband and children, and every one, including Mme. de Duras, who mention her in the pages of these records, speak of her as "that angel." She was beautiful as well as good and charming, and the love of her husband's family as well as of her own seems to have been centred in her. What manner of man M. le Vicomte was we know not; the only mention of him is contained in his wife's farewell letter, written at the Luxembourg and sent under cover of one to M. Grelet with the simple remark, "The few words I inclose are for Louis." They run thus:

You will find a letter from me, my friend, written at different times and very badly put together. I should like to have re-written it and added many things, but that has not been possible here. I can then only renew to you the assurance of that most tender feeling for you of the existence of which you know already and which will follow me beyond the grave. You will be aware in what situation I have found myself, and you will learn with consolation that God has taken care of me, that He has sustained my strength and my courage, that the hope of obtaining your salvation, your eternal happiness and that of my children by the sacrifice of my life,

has encouraged and will encourage me in its most terrible moments. I place in your hands these dear children, who have been the consolation of my life, and who will I hope be yours. I have confidence that you will only seek to strengthen in them the principles which I have tried to inculcate; they are the only source of true happiness, and the only means of attaining to it. There remains for me, my friend, one last request to make to you, which will, I believe, be superfluous when you know it. It is to conjure you with the utmost earnestness never to separate from these children M. Grelet, whom I leave near them. I charge my dear Alexis to tell you all we owe to him. There is no care and no softening of my lot that I have not at all times owed to him, particularly since I have been in prison. He has served as father and mother to those poor children; he has devoted himself and sacrificed himself for them and for me in the most painful circumstances with a tenderness and courage we shall never be able to repay. The sole consolation I carry with me is to know that my children are in his hands. You will not frustrate it my friend, and I have firm confidence that you will regard this wish of mine as sacred.

Yet underneath her confidence seems to have lain a latent anguish of unacknowledged doubt, for with the letters she incloses to M. Grelet her last brief testament, in which she gives her children into his care in even more formal and urgent terms. "They tell me it will be valid," she adds pathetically.

The last note she wrote before her execution was to the tutor, to thank him for his successful efforts to send her some linen and a few other necessaries.

I have received all that you sent me, my dear child, and I thank you a thousand thousand times, and never cease saying to you as the poor do: May God reward you! It is and will be the cry of my heart from up above as from the bottom of the abyss. I was wrong to say yesterday "*the* mother and *the* children," I should have said as I say now with all my heart, Your mother and your brothers. . . . Without you what would have become of them?

Farewell dear, dear children. I embrace you as tenderly as I love you.

(Signed) Louise Noailles.

Everything in the Vicomtesse de Noailles' conduct, and all her utterances bear witness to the dignity and beauty of a character, which, if not exceptional, at least serves to remind us that there were women of that period other in heart and soul,—Court ladies and *grandes dames*, though they too might be—from the frivolous, curious, sceptical, light-natured beings, the minutiæ of whose dress and deportment along with their incurable levity lives for us in the pages of the De Goncourt's *Femme au XVIII*ième *Siècle*, and elsewhere. And it is well to be thus reminded that in spite of those faults and follies which helped to bring about *le grand dêbâcle*, pure and brave spirits were to be found, whose actions and example in part redeemed their time, though they themselves were swept away and perished in its flood.

But to return to M. Carrichon's narrative. In June of that terrible summer, M. Grelet came to ask him whether he would render the same service he had promised to Madame de Noailles to her father and mother-in-law the old Maréchal de Mouchy and his wife. The priest went immediately to the Palais de Justice, where the prisoners had been moved, and succeeded in penetrating into the court-yard where all the condemned were assembled. Those he especially sought were close to him under his eyes for more than a quarter of an hour, but he had only once before seen M. and Madame de Mouchy, and though he knew them, they were not able to distinguish him. What he could he did for them, "by the inspiration and with the help of God;" and he heard the brave old soldier praying aloud with all his heart, and was told by others that the evening before, as they left the Luxembourg and their fellow-prisoners pressed round them with expressions of sympathy, the Marshal made answer,—"At seventeen I mounted the breach for my king; at seventy-eight I go to the scaffold for my God. Friends, I am not unfortunate."

On this occasion M. Carrichon

thought it useless to attempt to follow the convoy to the guillotine, and he augured ill for the fulfilment of the promise made to Louise de Noailles. She and her mother had been with the de Mouchys to the last, doing their best to serve and solace them, and he knew now that their turn to go might be very near. Yet all through the dreary month that followed the tumbrils rolled daily, and heads fell by the score, and his friends still lived.

The 22nd of July fell on a Tuesday, and early in the morning, between eight and ten o'clock, just as M. Carrichon was going out, he heard a knock and, on opening the door, saw the young de Noailles and their tutor. The boys were merry with the light-heartedness of their age and from ignorance of their situation, but the haggard sadness expressed in M. Grelet's face told the priest at once that the blow had fallen. Leaving the children, he drew him into an inner room, where, flinging himself wearily into a chair, the young man told him that the three ladies de Noailles had gone before the revolutionary tribunal and that he came to summon him to keep his promise. He himself was going to take the two boys to Vincennes, where their little sister, Euphémie, of four years old, had been left in charge of friends, and during the walk through the woods he intended to prepare the unhappy children for their terrible loss.

The previous evening, at half-past seven, M. Grelet had gone as usual to the Luxembourg, to take Madame de Noailles a parcel of necessaries for her use. Arrived at the bottom of the Rue de Tournon he had seen to his consternation a large crowd of men and women collected at the doors of the prison. He left his parcel at a shop in the adjoining street where a woman lived who was a friend of the Duchesse d'Ayen's waiting-maid, and continued his road. On joining the crowd he had little difficulty in guessing what had attracted it, when he caught sight of a large uncovered cart with benches fastened across it. He knew at once that it must be intended to convey the prisoners who were destined for the morrow's butchery to the fatal *Conciergerie*, and with a shudder of horror a presentiment came over him that those he sought would be among the victims. He determined to wait the departure of the prisoners, and slipping through the press got as near to the door as possible.

In a few minutes a gaoler came out and catching sight of him said, "Off with you! they are in it." But he did not go. The heart-breaking thought that it was the last time he should see them held him fast. The gaoler went in again, and a very short time after the doors opened and the prisoners appeared, preceded by two *gendarmes*. Madame de Noailles came first of their party. She passed close to M. Grelet, took his hand and pressed it affectionately in token of farewell. A *gendarme* saw the gesture. Madame d'Ayen and the old Maréchale came next, and they were helped up into the cart, followed by five or six women and as many men as it would contain. Then M. Grelet left his post, and tried to mingle unperceived with the crowd, but till their convoy started Madame de Noailles' eyes followed him. It was impossible to pack all the prisoners into the cart, and about fifteen or so had to follow it on foot with an escort. During these preparations for their transport Louise de Noailles' beseeching glance caught her friend's, and joining her two hands she bent her fair head and made sign to him to pray, then, lifting it, she pointed with her fingers towards heaven, and made the gesture of benediction in his direction. The crowd began to look about in search of the person to whom these signs were addressed, and M. Grelet appeared to seek too, as if they had not been meant for him, for he well knew how compromising they were. At last, after half an hour's waiting, the prisoners started, and he determined to follow them as far as the *Conciergerie*.

In the middle of the Rue de Condé, at a place where it was very narrow and both cart and crowd were close against the houses, Mme. de Noailles, who had not for a moment lost sight of him, raised her hand and gave him three benedictions,—it was the number of her children. This imprudence, of the rashness of which she was herself unaware, was nearly bringing fresh disasters on him and consequently on those she loved best. Just as they were crossing the Pont Neuf, M. Grelet heard a *gendarme* say behind him: "I arrest you; I recognize you." He took to his heels, and ran across the Quai des Lunettes. It was about eight o'clock and the workmen were leaving their shops. They thought he was an escaped prisoner and tried to stop him, but he hit them aside with his cane, and rushed on, only to reach the Quai des Orfèvres where he tripped and fell, and was seized by two workmen who held him till the *gendarme* came up, when he made no further effort at flight. A man, who happened to be there, said he was a *juge de paix*, and inquired why he was being arrested. The *gendarme* said he had been trying to communicate with the prisoners, and M. Grelet thought it useless to try and justify himself. While he was being led by his captor to the Prefecture of Police, he saw in the distance Mme. de Noailles and her fellow-prisoners entering the prison of the *Conciergerie*.

He was first put into a cell where there was a little light, and he took that opportunity to destroy whatever compromising papers he had about him, and found that fortunately he had with him his *carte de sureté*, which had been given him a few days before. He had hardly finished partly tearing up, and partly swallowing the papers, when a gaoler appeared and, ordering him to follow, conducted him to a smaller and completely dark dungeon closed by an iron door, where, seated on a stone bench, the young man passed some profoundly wretched hours, tortured by the recollection of Mme. de Noailles' imminent and certain fate, torn by his anxiety for the poor children who, in the event of anything happening to him, would be left utterly destitute, and who were now awaiting his return in their father's old apartments in the Hotel Noailles-Mouchy. Then, overcome by the agony of the present moment and the dread of the morrow, he flung himself on his knees and prayed with despairing fervour.

About ten o'clock the gaoler came back, this time accompanied by an officer who demanded his card. "Will you let me tell you how it happened and why I am here?" asked M. Grelet. And then he simply related the exact truth; how he had been near the Luxembourg as the prisoners came out, and that one of them in passing had pressed his hand, but that they had not exchanged a single word. The officer listened attentively, then went away, taking the card with him and leaving the tutor with his anxieties redoubled. He felt persuaded that they would now go at once to the Hotel Mouchy, and in searching it would find his correspondance with Mme. de Noailles, in which case his death-warrant was signed. But the strain did not last long. The officer soon returned and said curtly, "There's your card, be off with you, and don't come so close again,"—words which caused him a moment's brief joy, as he thus unexpectedly regained his liberty.

His joy could not last long, darkened by the thought that he was leaving Mme. de Noailles in the antechamber of death; but he got back to her children at midnight, and in the early morning while they still slept, he went out to the Rue des Saints-Pères, and found a certain Father Brun, a brave and devoted man whom he knew to be in the habit of following all the tumbrils to the scaffold, praying for the prisoners and giving them the last absolution, and told him that his friends would be among that day's victims. M. Grelet was evidently afraid that something unforeseen might

prevent M. Carrichon from keeping his promise to the de Noailles, and he was determined that they should not be deprived of that last consolation. And here the priest's narrative comes in, and tells the remainder of the story,—of how nearly he failed to keep his promise, and of how at last he was enabled to fulfil it.

Once alone with his reflections, after M. Grelet and the children had gone, M. Carrichon felt utterly appalled at the prospect of the task he had undertaken. Nothing gives a fresher stamp of truth and vivid reality to his simple narration than the betrayal of his own irresolution which is more than once repeated in its pages. He was a good man, but no hero. A man of heart, but not a man of strong nerves; and, having tried it once, he was keenly aware of the tremendous nature of the risk he ran, compared with the very slight chance there could be of succeeding in his mission. This psychological characteristic, which cannot fairly be called want of courage, certainly adds something to M. Carrichon's own account of that day's events. It makes one feel so intensely the passionate struggle, which up to the last moment went on in his mind, between the natural instinct of self-preservation and the earnest desire to do his duty by those who had confided their spiritual welfare to him while they were still at ease and in safety.

"My God!" he cried aloud in his distress of mind, "have pity alike on them and on me!"

Then the priest disguised himself as agreed, and went out. He transacted some business of his own first, carrying about with him everywhere a heart of lead, and between one and two o'clock went to the Palais de Justice. He was not allowed to enter, but he contrived to ask a few questions of some who had just come from the tribunal, and their answers dispelled the last illusions of hope. He could doubt the horrible truth no longer. His business next took him to the Faubourg Saint-Antoine, and it was not till nearly five o'clock that he returned with slow, lagging, irresolute steps, desiring in his heart either not to arrive in time, or else not to find there those who so much desired his presence.

When he reached the Palace, nothing as yet announced the departure of the prisoners. For nearly an hour he waited, at once the shortest and the longest hour of his life, pacing the great hall in an agony of anxiety, and glancing from time to time into the court below to see what preparations were going forward. At length, about six o'clock, a noise of opening doors struck on his strained ears. He went down hurriedly, and placed himself as near as possible to the grating that barred the entrance to the prison. For the last fortnight no one had been allowed within the courtyard on these occasions. The first cart was filled, and came slowly towards him. It contained eight ladies all personally unknown to him; but in the last of their number he recognized the old Maréchale de Noailles, and the sight of her, alone without her daughter-in-law or her granddaughter, revived within him a ray of hope. It was instantly quenched. They were together in the last cart. Mme. de Noailles, girlishly young and fair, looking scarcely twenty-four, all in white, which she had worn as mourning since the death of her father and mother-in-law, M. and Mme. de Mouchy, and Mme. d'Ayen in a striped *deshabille* of blue and white. Six men mounted the cart, and M. Carrichon noticed that the two first placed themselves at a little distance from the two ladies with an air of respect, as if with the desire to give them a brief spell of privacy.

Hardly were they seated when Mme. de Noailles began to show her mother a tender eager solicitude, which caught the attention of the bystanders: "Do you see that young one," the priest heard some one near him say, "how she moves about and talks to the other?"

Then he perceived that the prisoners'

eyes were searching for him, and from their expressions he seemed to hear their whispered words: "Mother, he is not there;"—"Look again!"—"Nothing escapes me; I assure you he is not there!"

They had forgotten—poor souls!—in their acute anxiety a fact of which he had sent them warning, that he could not possibly enter the courtyard. The first cart remained close to him for at least a quarter of an hour. Directly it began to move on, the other started, and M. Carrichon made ready. It passed, and neither saw him. He re-entered the Palais de Justice, made a long detour, and placed himself in a conspicuous place at the opening of the Pont au Change. Mme. de Noailles gazed round in all directions, but by a curious fatality missed him again. He followed them the length of the bridge, separated from them by the crowd, but still in fairly close proximity. Mme. de Noailles sought the whole time, yet did not perceive him. Mme. d'Ayen's face began to wear an extreme disquietude, and her daughter redoubled her attention, but in vain. Then the priest confesses that he felt tempted to renounce his dangerous mission. "I have done all I can," he said to himself. "Everywhere else the crowd will be even greater. It cannot be done, and I am tired to death."

He was just about to desist and retrace his steps, when the sky grew dark, and a distant murmur of thunder was heard. A sudden impulse made him determine to try again. By short cuts and back ways he contrived to reach the street of Saint Antoine before the tumbrils, at a spot nearly opposite the too famous prison of La Force. And now the wind rose and the brooding storm burst in all its fury, with lightning and thunder and torrents of rain. The priest withdrew beneath a doorway, standing on the step of a shop, which was ever after present to his memory and which he never could see again without emotion. In one instant the street was swept clear of all spectators; every one had run under cover or up into the windows, and the line of march in the advancing procession became broken and disordered. The horsemen and the foot guards moved along quicker, and the carts also. In another minute they were close to the Little Saint Antoine, and M. Carrichon was still undecided what to do.

The first cart passed him, and then an uncontrollable, involuntary inspiration made him hastily leave the doorway and advance toward the second. He found himself close to it and quite alone, with Madame de Noailles smiling down at him with a radiant smile of welcome that seemed to say, —"Ah! there you are at last; how glad we are!" Then she called her mother's attention to him, and the poor woman's failing spirit revived. And with that brave action all the priest's own agony of irresolution passed away and left him strong and peaceful. By the grace of God he felt himself filled with an extraordinary courage to do and dare the utmost. Drenched with sweat and rain he thought no more of that, or of any outward things, and continued to walk beside them. On the steps of the College of St. Louis he perceived a friend—Father Brun of the Oratory—also seeking to render them his last service of consolation, and to express his respect and attachment. The latter's face and attitude showed all he felt on seeing them thus on their road to death, and as M. Carrichon passed him he touched him on the shoulder, saying with a thrill of inexpressible emotion, "Bon soir, mon ami!"

Here there was a square into which several streets ran, and at this point the storm was at its height and the wind at its wildest. The ladies in the first carriage were very much discomfited by it, especially the Maréchale de Noailles. Her big cap was blown off, her head and grey hair exposed, while she and all the others swayed to and fro in the tempest on their miserable benches without any backs, and

their hands tied behind them. A number of people who had collected there in spite of the storm, recognized the well-known face of the great Court lady, and fixed all their attention on her, adding to her torment with insulting cries. "There she is!" they shrieked—"that Maréchale, who used to cut such a dash and drive in such a grand chariot—in the cart like all the rest!" The noise continued and followed them, while the sky grew darker and the rain more violent. They reached the square before the Faubourg St. Antoine. M. Carrichon moved on ahead to reconnoitre, and swiftly decided that here at last was the best place to accord the prisoners that which they so greatly desired. The second cart was going a little slower, and, stopping short, he turned towards its occupants making a sign which Mme. de Noailles perfectly understood and communicated to her mother. Then, as the two women bent their heads, "with an air of repentance, hope and piety," the priest raised his hand and with covered head pronounced, distinctly and with concentrated attention, the whole formula of absolution and the words that follow it. All thought of self was obliterated in the solemn joy of that moment. Then the sky cleared and the rain ceased, and as the carts advanced into the faubourg a curious mocking crowd assembled to watch them pass. The ladies in the first one were heaped with insults, the Maréchale especially, but no one said a word to Mme. d'Ayen and her daughter. M. Carrichon continued to accompany them on their dreary road, sometimes beside them, sometimes a little in advance. By the Abbaye Saint Antoine he met a young man whom he knew, a priest whose integrity he had reason to suspect, and for an instant was in great fear of being recognized. But he passed without notice, and at last they arrived at the fatal spot. Then, at sight of the guillotine—at the knowledge that in a few minutes more all these helpless victims of blind rage would one after another pass out of life under its pitiless stroke, a fresh agony of horror and despair swept over the priest's sad heart. He thought most of those he knew and loved, but he thought also of others, unknown to him, men and women perishing cruelly, unavailingly, in their prime, of the children orphaned, and the homes made desolate for ever.

The carts stopped and the guards surrounded them, with a crowd of spectators, for the most part laughing, jesting, and amusing themselves over the details of the harrowing scene. To be forced to see it all, to stand among them, and to listen to the fierce ferocity of their light remarks, was an experience whose memory a man might well carry engraved on his heart to his dying day!

While the executioner was helping the ladies out of the first cart Mme. de Noailles' eyes were seeking for the priest's face, and having found it, dwelt there with looks full of sweet gratitude to him, and tender farewell to all those dear ones passed out of her sight for ever. M. Carrichon drew his hat down over his eyes so as to attract as little notice as possible, but kept them fixed on her. The mob had grown satiated on the subject of youth, beauty, and innocence mounting the scaffold, and it was not so much these characteristics of Louise de Noailles that attracted its fickle attention, as her air of radiant serenity, the expression of a soul whose triumphant faith has looked grim Death in the face, and for whom its bitterness is overpast. "Ah! that young one, how content she is! How she lifts her eyes to heaven! How she prays! But what good will that do her?" Then, as if the sight of a spirit in that frail body they could not touch, a fortitude and courage they could not conquer, a last degradation of suffering they could not inflict, stirred them to dull fury, came the savage murmur, "Ah! les scélérats de calotins! . . ."

The last farewells were then exchanged, and the final act of the hideous

drama was played out under the priest's shrinking, yet fascinated eyes. He left the spot where he had been standing, and went round to the other side where he found himself facing the rough wooden steps that led up to the scaffold. Against them leant an old man with white hair, a *fermier général* some one said,—a lady he did not know —and just opposite to him the old Maréchale de Noailles, clad in black taffetas, was sitting on a block of stone, waiting with fixed wide-open eyes for her turn to come. All the others were ranged in two lines on the side looking towards the Faubourg St. Antoine. From where M. Carrichon now stood he could only see Mme. d'Ayen. Her anxiety was at rest now, and her whole attitude expressed a simple and resigned devotion in the sacrifice she was about to offer to God through the merits of her Saviour. The Maréchale de Noailles went third to that altar of sacrifice. The executioners had to cut away part of her dress to uncover her neck sufficiently, and at this point the priest felt an intense longing to go away. But he was determined now to drink the cup to its last dregs, to keep his word to the bitter end, since God had given him strength to control himself even while shuddering with dread. Six ladies followed her, and the tenth victim was Mme. d'Ayen, content to die before her daughter, as the daughter was content to die after her mother. The executioner pulled off her cap, and, as there was a pin in it she had forgotten to take out, he wrenched her hair violently, causing a sharp expression of pain to cross her calm face. And then with quickened poignancy of emotion the priest watched Louise de Noailles' slender white figure mount the steps. "She looked much younger than she really was, like a little gentle lamb going to the slaughter." There was the same trouble with her headdress as with her mother's, but in a moment her face recovered its sweet composure. "'Oh! how happy she is now!' I cried inwardly as they threw her body down into its ghastly coffin. 'May the almighty and merciful God reunite us all in that dwelling-place where there will be no more revolutions, in that country which, as St. Augustine said, will have 'Truth for its King, Charity for its Law, Eternity for its term.'"

A SUMMER HOLIDAY IN JAPAN.

As summer comes round in Japan so does the inevitable question "Where are you going this year?" Most of the inhabitants of Tokyo and Yokohama flee to the mountains "to take the cool," as the peculiar Japanese English expresses it. The missionaries lead the flight, and officials, men of business, and others follow as they can. These mountain retreats, however, do not promise much amusement to the solitary bachelor, if he is neither an artist nor a pedestrian. Such being the case, I announced my intention of seeing something of the southern towns, the cities of Osaka and Kyoto. Great was the surprise: "You will be roasted!" "There is nobody there now"—to which I could merely reply that I liked being warm, and was glad that no one was there. A German friend of mine, an old soldier, made a more apposite remark: "*Ach*, you will be hot," quoth he, "but you will see pretty girls;" and he stumped away (for he had seen service) chuckling. I made up my mind, and, having been fortunate enough to find a companion for at all events part of the way, on Saturday, August 3rd, I set sail from Yokohama to Kobe.

Never was such a pleasant passage. We were four Europeans in the saloon, M. and myself from Tokyo, and a couple of merchants returning to Kobe. They, by the way, had come up to Yokohama by the new railway, but not for four hundred dollars would they repeat the experiment. Our skipper was a genial Norseman, who bore his years lightly. Our ship, the *Omi Maru*, was a comfortable boat belonging to the Nippon Yusen Kaisha, the P. and O. of Japan. The sea was calm, the breeze was cool, and with pleasant companions, tobacco, and long yarns, it was a dream of sailing. By 2 P.M. on Sunday we had reached Kobe, a small sea-port backed by high green hills, which at first sight hardly seem to leave room for a town, but appearances are proverbially deceptive. There is room for a well laid out foreign settlement inhabited by a most hospitable body of residents, and also for a fairly large Japanese town. It is too modern a place to have many sights, but it is necessary to go and see the waterfall. On Monday morning I set out, and after a very hot ride of some twenty-five minutes, reached the foot of an uncompromising looking hill. I gazed forlornly at my *jinriksha* man. "You must go up there," said he. I murmured something in English, expressive of despair. "Shall I come with you?" he continued, smiling sweetly. "Certainly not," and I attacked the hill. I did not have to go very far before I came upon the first waterfall,—a lovely spot. The water falls perpendicularly from a considerable height into a pool below; the said pool being used as a bathing-place with a simplicity worthy of the Garden of Eden. All round are trees, looking deliciously green and cool after the parched-up town. There is a small tea-house on the spot, and out flocked the damsels to capture the stranger. They addressed me in a hideous jargon which they dropped when they found I could speak a little Japanese. I had to answer the usual questions, "Where do you come from?" "How old are you?" "Have you got a wife?" "Would you like to have a wife?"—the answer to the latter question being in the negative. Having satisfied their thirst for information, and my own for refreshment, I passed on to the upper waterfall where the scene was much the same as lower down.

I had no intention of making a prolonged stay at Kobe, so on Wednesday

afternoon I took the train to Osaka, and after an hour's ride in scorching heat arrived at a yet more scorching station. At the Jintei Hotel I found I could get a room, and was also pleased to hear that M. was staying there. There seemed to be a great excitement in the hotel, everybody was in a hurry, and there were swarms of *nesan* (waiting-maids), many more than the size of the hotel seemed to require. "How many guests have you here to-day?" "Oh, about four hundred." "Four hundred?" thought I. "This must be a regular Hôtel Métropole, and yet I have got the last foreign room, and that is only No. 9." On further enquiry, however, it turned out that the four hundred guests were members of the Educational Society, and were having a periodical dinner there. That afternoon I spent in watching the guests arrive, in company with sundry contemplative Chinamen,—for the Chinese *Chargé d'Affaires* and his *suite* were staying in the hotel. The Educationalists seemed a jovial crowd, and there was a good deal of flirting with the attendant damsels, even to the extent of some hugging in corners. Just before dinner M. arrived, and then we had a real treat. The balcony of the hotel hangs over a broad shallow river. Just as we sat down to dinner a military band took its place on a raft in the middle of the stream, and all the jolly pedagogues embarked in boats, in parties of five or six; most of the boats, I noticed, carrying a considerable cargo of beer. When the sun went down the scene was lovely. A sultry, cloudless night, the subdued strains of music, the hundreds of boats crowding the river, all gay with red, blue, or white lanterns, combined to produce one of the prettiest sights possible.

There is not much to see in Osaka, though it is a busy place, the commercial centre of the country. It boasts an infinitude of small narrow streets, and countless bridges over the canals; so many are there that Osaka has been called the Venice of Japan,—not a very happy comparison. One temple did I visit, Ikudama by name, but I blush to say that my attention was more engrossed by the charms of a young woman in a small tea-house there than by the temple. We became great friends, and when I left Osaka she made me a present of the little band of cloth which many Japanese women wear round their arms, containing some kind of spice. One afternoon M. and I visited Sakai, a largish fishing-town some seven miles from Osaka. During the stormy times of twenty years ago, this place gained notoriety from the slaughter of a French officer and a boat's crew by troops from Tosa. For this murder twenty of the perpetrators were sentenced to commit *hara-kiri*, but after eleven of them had slain themselves, the French officers present, horrified by the awful sight, interceded, and the remaining nine escaped. Now it is a dull, dark town. It possesses, however, a splendid beach, faced by a row of Japanese hotels, erected to accommodate the bathers from Osaka and Kobe. In one of these we took refuge, and, greatly desiring to go to sleep, had our heads nearly talked off by an exceedingly ugly old woman. We examined, with rather languid interest, some temples, but one temple is, it must be confessed, very much like another. The evening we spent strolling on the bridges near the hotel, and here it was lively enough. The sides of the bridge were lined with small ice-booths, and before every one stood an old or young woman (generally old, I regret to say), crying "*O kake yasu* (please sit down)." We did sit down near one, and ordered *kori* (ice). A glass was brought to each, filled with shavings of ice, planed off a block, mixed with sugar. This is a favourite refreshment in Japan, and far from a bad one. But our attendant!—she was the daintiest little damsel I had ever seen, with charming manners, and a sweet plaintive voice. Sadly was she thrown away upon the somewhat raffish crowd on the bridge, and great was the heart-ache she occasioned both of us. But these are sad remem-

brances of Osaka; let us go on to Kyoto.

It was with no particular feelings of regret that I left the Jintei Hotel at Osaka. It was one of the hottest places conceivable, and, in common with most Japanese hotels in European style, there was no one in authority to whom one could appeal. Certainly there were three "boys," but which was the head-boy it was impossible to make out. One of them had a hideous fascination for me. He was airily dressed in a single garment that looked like a very short night shirt, indescribably filthy. He seemed always on some sort of duty about the rooms, and I used to watch him with horror as he handled the plates, praying that I might not get the one his thumb was on. He also officiated as billiard-marker, for the hotel boasted a billiard-room, containing an English table of unknown make, and one of those American tables where the balls are like cannon-balls and the cues like telegraph-poles.

Early on Saturday afternoon M. and I started for Kyoto, arriving there after about an hour's journey. Our first destination was the great silk-store, the Takashima-ya, for M. had been commissioned to take sundry purchases back to Tokyo. Here we saw silks of the most lovely texture and colours; and here I first began to understand what a Japanese lady's wardrobe must cost, when I saw *obi* (girdles) at seventy or eighty dollars, or even rising into the hundreds. A delightful shop this—and much did we congratulate ourselves that we had no ladies with us to insist upon seeing every square yard in the place. As it was the temptation to spend money was very sore. Not only were there silks for wearing apparel, but also delightful embroideries for screens, silk pictures for framing and hanging up, and many other pretty things. But all things come to an end, and so, after two hours, had M.'s purchases, and now for the hotel—not the Yaami, the tourists' resort, but the Nakamura-ya. Through the busy streets we go, past some fine new temples that are just being completed; then half way up a hill, we pass under a huge stone *torii* (two pillars with a cross bar on the top), and before us stands the entrance to a temple resplendent in gold and vermilion. But just before we reach it we turn under a more lowly doorway and are received by the boys of the Nakamura-ya.

After dinner, our party being increased by the arrival of two friends from Kobe, we set out for that part of Kyoto where the shows abound. A quarter of an hour's stroll brings us there. We find a street composed almost entirely of what might be called penny gaffs, with the difference that these are quite respectable. Shall we see a theatre, some dancing, a conjuror, or hear some story-telling? We choose the conjuror, and are just in time for a thrilling sight. A long board on trestles is put on the stage, and a fat little girl stretches herself on it. The conjuror takes a huge sword and drives it slowly through her, an attention she receives with a kick, and a vast effusion of blood carefully and economically caught in a pan. The corpse is then put into a large paper lantern, in which appears a gloomy red light, and behold! the shadow of a skeleton. When the light has faded, enter the girl from the side, her fat face as placid as ever! After this a peep-show has little attraction, while a three-legged calf and a snake with two heads are only tiresome; so we return to the hotel and make early for bed.

Next morning we are off in good time by the train to Otani, a place somewhat to the north of Kyoto. The journey lasts about an hour, most of it being up a very steep gradient. The country here is lovely, tea-plantations in the foreground, and in the background hills covered with groves of bamboo. At Otani we take *jinriksha* to Otsu, the place from which the steamers start to cross Lake Birva. At Otsu we rest in a tea-house for a short time, and in a futile endeavour to take

some ice with us very nearly miss the boat. However we just get on board, and at 10.30 A.M. begin our voyage across the lake. A very pleasant voyage it is, as the breeze is delightfully cool and our little boat is not uncomfortably crowded. But the shores of the lake somewhat disappointed me. Perhaps I had expected too much; at all events they struck me as somewhat flat and uninteresting. About 2 P.M. we reached our destination, Hikone; and, after leaving our luggage at a tea-house, sallied out to view the castle, one of the few still left in the country. We climbed a steep hill, and soon arrived at the outworks, consisting of a massive wall pierced for two gates which looked capable of a very stubborn defence. The castle is quite a small building and might more properly be called a fort. It has a quaint appearance, with its many pointed gables and glaring white colour; but it must, or so we think, have been exceedingly uncomfortable to live in. It is pierced with loop-holes for arrows, and on the third story for small cannon. From the top is a lovely view of the lake and the surrounding country; a scene so peaceful that it is difficult to imagine the time when the fierce *samarai* fought their bloody battles round these shores, and when the quiet woods must have resounded with their savage yells. Hikone Castle is especially interesting as having belonged to Ti Kwannon no Kami, the first Japanese statesman who concluded a treaty with foreigners. He paid dearly for his enlightened policy. One snowy day he was returning from an audience with the Mikado in the castle of Yedo. His retinue took no heed of some twenty men who were lounging about a gate, dressed in the straw rain-cloaks of coolies. Suddenly the cloaks were cast off, and a body of men in full armour made a desperate attack on the minister. They reached his palanquin, and dragging him out, there and then decapitated him. The murderers were *rônin* (unattached *samarai*) of the Mito clan, the uncompromising foes of everything foreign.

But it is time to return to the tea-house, for our friends have a long journey back to Kobe. This tea-house was once the villa of the *daimyo* of the Castle, and a very fine house it is. The garden is especially beautiful, with its quaint dwarf trees, old stone lanterns, and little bridges, though the effect is somewhat spoiled by a waterless pond. Here we make a very sufficient meal of fish and rice, and are presented with a more than sufficient bill. Great is the wrath of the old residents that we should have to pay tourists' prices; but there is no time to argue the point; as it is we nearly miss the train. A somewhat hot and tedious journey brings us back to Kyoto, where I leave my friends to continue theirs to Osaka and Kobe respectively.

For the next few days sight-seeing is my occupation. The chief buildings of interest in the city are temples; indeed it is the headquarters of most of the Buddhist sects. The sight of many temples necessarily leaves a somewhat confused impression on the mind; a vague sensation of massive roofs, gorgeous colouring, curious carving, with no clear recollection where and when one has seen them all. Perhaps the things that struck me most were the fine temple of Kyomidzu, built on the side of a hill and supported on piles; a colossal wooden head of a *Daibutsu* (Great Buddha); and a temple called Sanjusangendo, where there are some fifteen hundred images of Buddha standing in long rows. In another temple I was shown where the mighty hero Toyotomi Hideyoshi had lived, his sleeping-room, bath-room, &c. Very small and dark they were, but the terrible Hideyoshi was a small man. Interesting too was another kind of sight,—namely, the work-shops where the *shippo* (*cloisonné*) ware was being made. I saw all the stages of decoration and colouring, but unfortunately my knowledge of the

language could go no further than vague expressions of admiration.

A very popular evening resort in Kyoto is the bed of the river, the Kamogawa, which is almost entirely dry in summer. I made my way there one evening, passing through the ice-booths on each side in spite of the strenuous cries of their proprietors. I thought I had escaped, when suddenly on each side of me appeared a little damsel. They laid their hands on my arms, plaintively entreating, "*Eijin san o kake yasu* (Englishman, please sit down)." Who could resist such an appeal? I was compelled to sit down and order lemonade, though twenty little damsels could not have made me drink it. Kyoto is famous for its pretty girls, and, on the principle of seeing everything, the intelligent traveller will naturally devote part of his time to such very pleasant objects of interest.

On one afternoon, having nothing particular to do, I visited an *onna-shibai*, a theatre where all the performers are women. There was nothing particular in the performance, but the closing scene was rather amusing to foreign eyes. A pair of guilty lovers had been sentenced to death. The executioner, apparently a coolie, sat down and calmly sharpened an enormous chopper, while the unhappy victims writhed on the ground. Finally, when the chopper was keen enough, up jumped the avenger, and, after much posturing to represent triumph, gave the "man" the fatal blow. Immediately from the back of the stage there rushed out a boy with a black cap on his head, the said black cap intimating that he had nothing to do with the action of the piece. This "super" held a cloth in front of the corpse, which scrambled off the stage, at the same time passing a grisly wooden head to the executioner who brandished it triumphantly. The same scene was gone through with the lady; and, in spite of the tragic nature of the scene, to say nothing of its sound morality, I must own to have laughed consumedly.

This was one of the last sights I saw in Kyoto. All pleasant things must come to an end, and so did my visit there. One more night I spent in Osaka, in order to join M. We went together to a street full of shows, almost identical with that one in Kyoto which I have already described, and were well rewarded by seeing some extremely pretty dancing. Three little maids, the eldest about fifteen, were the performers; and to witness their graceful posturing and clever use of their fans, of which each held two, was certainly cheap at the two *sen* we paid for entrance, and went some way to compensate for the extreme heat of the theatre. But as a rule we found the crowds in the street outside more amusing than the inside of the close, ill-smelling buildings.

We had taken our tickets to go by the *Kobe Maru* to Yokohama, when we heard the pleasant intelligence that the weather-prophets predicted a typhoon. This was no joke, but we resolved to try our luck, especially as the *Kobe Maru* is one of the finest boats on the Nippon Yusen Kaisha line, and her captain one of the most popular of skippers. We started at noon and all went well till about six o'clock, when we heard that the weather-prophets had been right and that we were being chased by a typhoon. A very lively night followed, for though we were not caught, yet we felt the effects of the storm behind us, and very disastrous they were on some of the passengers.

Back once more in the dusty streets of Tokyo, there seemed a difference of atmosphere. People in the southern cities take life so much more merrily than in the capital; every one seems happier and freer, unharassed by ever-present officialdom. Perhaps, however, the difference existed a good deal in my imagination; I was coming back into harness, and my pleasant summer holiday was nearly at an end.

IV.

Of Scott's remaining heroines there are but two, we think, who help in any way to illustrate the particular contrast which it has been the object of these papers to represent, Lucy Bertram and Isabella Wardour. To begin with *Guy Mannering*,—though neither Julia Mannering nor Lucy Bertram belong to Scott's highest feminine creations they serve to exhibit this contrast in the clearest light, so much so that we should have been inclined to place Lucy in the same category with Alice Bridgnorth, but for the fact that she is not a central figure in the story, and only shares the part of heroine with another young lady who to many readers may seem more worthy of it. Here again we can only say that the less impulsive and more sober-minded of the two is in our judgment the more interesting. Julia, the daughter of Colonel Mannering, an heiress and a beauty, spoiled it would appear by a rather foolish mother whom she can only just have lost, had formed a clandestine engagement with a soldier of fortune in India when she was a mere child, and appears upon the scene in Scotland when she is still only seventeen. Her lover appears, or rather re-appears, there at the same time, and turns out to be the missing heir of Ellangowan who had been spirited away by smugglers on his fifth birthday. This discovery, however, is only made very gradually, and down to the eleventh hour both the lady and gentleman are in complete ignorance of the truth. We have to consider therefore how Julia conducts herself towards a suitor whom she knows only as a successful soldier, probably of humble origin, who had quarrelled with her father when the latter was his commanding officer, and whose addresses she receives in secret. He serenades her by moonlight from the waters of a Cumberland lake, and she of course appears at the balcony which overhangs it. "I hope the lady came after such a pretty song," says Henrietta Temple to Count Mirabel. "Of course she did," said the Count; "they always do." Probably no young lady, however well brought up, could altogether resist an appeal urged in such a romantic situation. Nor do we find any great fault with Julia for giving her handsome young adventurer this amount of encouragement. Whether she would have eloped with him or not, had circumstances been favourable to such a decisive step, we cannot undertake to say; but we should have been sorry to trust her with Brown kneeling at her feet and a postchaise round the corner. Here it will be said are all the materials for romance, and romance of a high order. Julia is no mere silly, sentimental schoolgirl, or wanton flirt, reckless of her honour like Lydia Bennet. Young, beautiful, high-spirited, and warm-hearted, she is a girl with mind, with a keen sense of the ridiculous, and with all the delicacy of a true lady. Why then is it that, much as we admire her, we are hardly conscious of sympathising with her; and that we cannot say honestly to ourselves that she interests us nearly so much as Lucy Bertram, with her quiet simplicity and self-possession, who has "never told her love," yet does not allow it to "prey on her damask cheek"? The answer, we think, is still the same. In Lucy we have a girl who combines singular sweetness and softness with equal force of character and

self-command; the result being that we witness in her that struggle between conflicting motives which we do not witness in Julia, and which is essential, as has often been repeated, to the highest kind of interest derivable from the study of character. Of course it may be said that our interest in Lucy is heightened by her misfortunes, by the ruin of an ancient house, and the spectacle of an only child, the daughter of a long line of illustrious ancestors, reduced to destitution. This is undeniable; but we must take our characters as we find them. It is by the action of adversity and domestic sorrow upon characters naturally gentle and affectionate that the result is produced which we find so attractive in Lucy Bertram. It may be that in similar circumstances Julia would have shown to the same advantage, and have kept Brown at a distance as Lucy kept young Hazlewood. That is nothing to the present purpose. The question is which of these two girls has Scott made the more interesting as heroines of fiction, and intended to please the readers of fiction; the lively, brilliant, self-willed girl who makes moonlight assignations with a forbidden lover, or the quiet, unassuming, but high principled and self-sacrificing maiden who, with equal depth of affection, is able to contain it within her own bosom and make it obedient to the dictates of duty? The question is not which of the two is the better entitled to our moral approbation, but which of them from a novel-reader's point of view, and as products of literary art, is actually the more *interesting?* We pronounce unhesitatingly for the latter.

Of Isabella Wardour very little need be said. She is certainly one of those heroines who, so to speak, keeps passion in its proper place, and thus far resembles those whom we have considered in a former chapter; but the devil of it is that she is not made interesting. We have many encomiums on her good sense, her filial piety, her beauty, and her courage. She is placed in the most romantic situations, and exposed to domestic trials which, however ignoble, might certainly have been turned to good account. But with all these materials we cannot strike a spark of interest out of her. She does not therefore really add anything to the evidence we have produced in support of our favourite theory. We have mentioned her because she undoubtedly fulfils one of its principal conditions. But she does not fulfil the other, which is more essential still, and she may therefore be dismissed at once.

We must now, however, take our leave of the particular question with which we started, and wind up with a few more general remarks relating to some of the Waverley heroines who do not seem to point the moral which we have endeavoured to keep in view throughout. In one of the best known passages in Lockhart's *Life of Scott*, Sir Walter contrasts his own characters with those of Miss Austen in the following terms:

> Read again, and for the third time at least, Miss Austen's very finely written novel of *Pride and Prejudice*. That young lady had a talent for describing the involvements and feelings and characters of ordinary life, which is to me the most wonderful I ever met with. The big Bow-wow strain I can do myself like any now going; but the exquisite touch, which renders ordinary common-place things and characters interesting from the truth of the description and the sentiments, is denied to me.

We think it will be admitted that Scott knew his own strength and his own weakness. And several of his heroines may be named in which he is conspicuously inferior to the authoress of *Pride and Prejudice*. Edith Bellenden, Isabel Vere, Rowena, Mary Avenel, Annot Lyle, Margaret Ramsay, Catherine Glover, are pretty creations in their way, especially the second named, who only just misses belonging to the first class; but we hardly see enough of her to stir our sympathies very deeply, and there is

no reason why on this occasion we should waste more words on any of them. There remain, however, five or six others who though they do not owe the deep interest they instil in us to the causes we have principally been considering and might be thought therefore to stand rather outside the scope of these speculations, possess an interest of another kind which makes it impossible to pass them over in silence in any account of the Waverley heroines. We could indeed hardly have refrained in any case from adding a few words on such popular favourites as Flora Mac Ivor and Rebecca, or two such sweet creatures as Rose Bradwardine and Evelyn Berenger, and on that incarnation of all that is bewitching, mischievous, and tantalising in woman, Catherine Seyton.

Flora Mac Ivor however, is no great favourite of ours. We rather agree with Colonel Talbot's opinion of her. She "gave herself airs," and that is enough to spoil any woman. We always feel inclined to address her in the words of Lord Tennyson, "Come down, oh maid, from yonder mountain height." As she herself says indeed, she is wedded to the Stuart cause, and has no room for the growth of other affections till that is either lost or won. At the same time we are permitted to see into her heart, and to understand, if she could have loved at all, what are the qualities that would have attracted her. Her test of a man is not what he is, but what he is likely to do in the world. When she half repents for a moment of her rejection of Waverley, it is when he shows himself for the first time "well fitted to fill a high place in the highest station of society," and perhaps to emulate his great ancestor Sir Nigel. Thus we think we see that her ideas of marriage were like those of her brother Fergus connected as much with ambition as with love. Whatever interest may be inspired in us by Flora Mac Ivor does not arise from the ordinary sources to which we usually look for it in the case of a young and beautiful woman. She does not convey the impression that she was born either to love or to be loved in the ordinary sense of the term. Waverley's passion was very short-lived, and was due as much to surrounding circumstances which dazzled his judgment as to any genuine and heartfelt affection. We may perhaps do her injustice; but in his endeavour to depict a character who was to be won, if at all, only by the heroic, Scott has made her seem cold and hard. Her feelings toward Waverley, *mutatis mutandis*, were not unlike those with which Lily Dale regarded John Eames. But how soft and womanly and lovable was Lily Dale all the time! No—we confess there is something about Flora which repels us, and we cannot help thinking that she affords a good illustration of a remark which has been made previously, that by an interesting heroine people often mean, if they only knew it, nothing more than a heroine who is the centre of an interesting story. Edward Waverley is a very great favourite of ours, and we resent Flora's behaviour to him. She is impertinent. If Diana Vernon was contented with Francis Osbaldeston, surely Flora Mac Ivor might have been contented with one that was worth a dozen of him. Flora, however, is a general favourite. Probably nine out of ten of the first people you met would say that she was Scott's masterpiece. But we do not see any lights and shades in her character. It wants softness and richness; and even her loyalty to the Stuarts and her devotion to her brother fail to make her amiable in our sight. It may not have struck even critical readers of the Waverley Novels, that Flora Mac Ivor after all does nothing to distinguish her above her sisters. Rose Bradwardine, left to rely upon herself in circumstances of great difficulty and danger, acts with sense and courage. The part played by Rose in the rescue of Waverley from the Cameronians, and her letter to Charles Edward apprising him of Waverley's danger, are much more in keeping with the character of

a heroine of romance than any action of Flora Mac Ivor's. Flora has no opportunity given her of displaying the same qualities and we are not obliged to take them upon trust. We think then that she has been as much overrated as Rose has been underrated. The latter is always made to play second fiddle to Flora without anything in the actual facts of the story to justify this subordinate position.

Passing to a very different type of character, the Jewess Rebecca, we find Scott at the very summit of his art. There is not indeed in Rebecca either that particular kind of inward struggle which is the chief element of interest in the Waverley heroines to whom we have awarded the palm in these essays; nor yet the sacrifice of all other considerations to one absorbing emotion which distinguishes another class. Fenella, for instance, in Rebecca's place would have hesitated at nothing to detach Ivanhoe from Rowena, and might have been equal even to the dagger or the bowl had opportunity offered. The purity and unselfishness of Rebecca's love for Ivanhoe is in keeping with the powerful yet calm and elevated character which helps her to rise superior to all the terrors and temptations to which she is exposed, and to humble before her even the proud and determined man who had been accustomed to trample on opposition. Conscious that a curse rests upon her race, yet strong in the conviction of an overruling Providence, and content to place her destiny in the hands of the God of Jacob, she is indeed a figure at once so touching and so sublime, that she stands out above all Scott's other creations on a pinnacle of her own. Nor is this all; she is the heroine of a tragedy of which the catastrophe is developed with a degree of art not exceeded even by Sophocles, for which as well perhaps, as for the extraordinary power with which it is described, Scott has never received full credit. When the Templar falls dead from his horse without a blow, and Rebecca is borne in safety from the lists; when the very passions which have consigned her to the stake become at one and the same moment the punishment of her oppressor and the instrument of her own deliverance, —we see poetic and divine justice united in a single picture of which we stand spellbound before the awful reality.

We have said this much of Rebecca lest it should be thought that the earlier papers were written in forgetfulness or depreciation of this noble character. It will be seen, we hope, that in those we had a distinct purpose in view to which such characters as Rebecca do not lend themselves. A few words will be all that it is necessary to devote to the remaining female figures which lend grace and life to some very interesting stories without exhibiting any marked characteristics of their own. Rowena it is hardly necessary to say is a mere walking lady who does not even stir the imagination. But Catherine Seyton, Edith Bellenden, Evelyn Berenger and the Countess Isabel, are all young ladies whom we feel that we should like to have known, and whose personal appearance we try to conjure up before ourselves. Catherine of course stands out far above the rest; but she is after all no more than a beautiful, quick-witted and very lively girl, such a one as we feel in real life would work havoc with hearts, but without any striking individual traits to attract the student of character. With Edith Bellenden we feel almost angry for not being in love with Lord Evandale, the pearl of chivalry and the most perfect gentleman whom even Scott has ever drawn, and so much more interesting than his successful rival Henry Morton. Scott, however, is no doubt true to human nature in giving to force of character precedence over all other qualities which are supposed to attract the female choice. That Morton was capable of as much self-sacrifice as Lord Evandale, Edith did not know; let us hope she found it out afterwards. She was what we should now call a

nice, sensible, amiable girl, and there's an end of her. Evelyn Berenger and Isabel of Croye are two soft, warm, nestling, cooing young creatures whom one would like to take up in one's arms and kiss. Both are placed in the most romantic situations, and both fall in love as they were bound to do with the squires appointed to attend them. But they cannot be called interesting in any of the various senses to which we have been limiting the word. They exhibit no conflict of emotions, no total abandonment of self to one master passion, no triumph over the terrors of death and torture, no picture of the ordinary passions and weaknesses of ordinary human beings such as we find in Justice Shallow, Miss Bates, or Solomon Macey. We felt, however, that we could not take leave of Scott's heroines without some mention of them, and can only hope that their admirers will not think we have said too little.

The difference between Scott himself and the novel-writers with whom he has compared himself is that in the Waverley Novels the characters are written for the story, whereas in Jane Austen or Miss Ferrier the story is written for the characters. In this respect Miss Austen rather resembled Richardson, of whom Johnson said that if you were to read his novels for the plot you would hang yourself. We do not mean to say that Miss Austen's plots are of that description, but simply that we do not read *Pride and Prejudice*, *Mansfield Park*, or *Emma*, for the sake of any curiosity or excitement with which the fortunes of Elizabeth Bennett and Mr. Darcy, of Fanny Price and Edward Bertram, of Emma Woodhouse and Mr. Knightly inspire us, but for the sake of the characters themselves, for the sake of Mr. Collins and Mr. Bennett, of Mrs. Norris and Lady Bertram, of Emma herself and Mr. Elton. The reverse is the case with Sir Walter Scott. Profoundly interesting as are many of his characters both male and female, nevertheless they are frequently forgotten in the stirring and romantic incidents with which they are surrounded and the gorgeous panorama which the great magician unfolds before us. Sometimes the plot itself is so deeply absorbing that we feel as if almost any characters were good enough to carry it on. Thus even the most interesting of the female portraits which we have been contemplating are more or less indebted to the splendour of the framework from which they look out upon us; and so far it is true that not only Flora Mac Ivor, but even Alice Lee and Alice Bridgnorth do owe some portion of their fascinations to the striking circumstances which surround them; that is to say, are interesting in some sense as being the heroines of an interesting story. We might substitute for either of them the stupidest heroine ever limned in Grub Street, and the plots would still be enthralling. But take away the individuals we have named from Miss Austen's novels and the story is gone. Scott then, though not less skilful in discriminating motives and exhibiting the play of human character than any of his predecessors or followers, yet seems to have required the stimulus of what actors call a strong situation to call forth all his powers, and where this was wanting to have lavished his strength on those individual passions and eccentricities which delight us in Mr. Oldbuck, Bailie Nicol Jarvie, the Baron of Bradwardine, Dugald Dalgetty, Meg Merrilies, and Meg Dodds. There is I think only one character in the whole gallery who might have figured in Jane Austen's social circle, and that is Miss Grizzel Oldbuck, the Antiquary's sister, who certainly seems to show that Scott himself was not wholly deficient in the art which he admired so much in these ladies; and that, to use the words of Horace in a slightly different sense from the original, he too knew how *communia dicere*, and to invest with a distinct personality the common-place person not distinguishable at first from a thousand others. But on the whole the rule is as we say, and as Scott himself

admitted it to be; and after all even Grizzel Oldbuck is not exactly like other people.

A connection, we think, may be traced, though the link of association is a subtle one, between this characteristic of Scott, and that other one to which Lockhart calls such pointed attention, and which may almost be said to constitute his differential peculiarity, we mean his firm belief in the superiority of the Man of Action over the Man of Thought, and of great magistrates, administrators, lawgivers and soldiers over philosophers and men of letters. Macaulay asks who would prefer the fame of Chatham to the fame of Johnson? Scott, whose character it was not in Macaulay's nature to appreciate or understand, would soon have answered him. For himself he would rather have been Scott of Abbotsford, a feudal proprietor charged with the maintenance of law and order in his allotted district, and discharging and deserving all the duties and privileges of a territorial aristocracy than have won the fame of Dante or Shakespeare. He seems naturally therefore to have chosen for his heroines situations in which they might exhibit the same qualities which he most prized himself, and help to glorify the system to which he looked back with such fondness. He knew that in its full perfection it had passed away, and, in spite of the thousands spent on Abbotsford, may have been secretly conscious that it was not to be revived. At all events he has drawn no representatives of it from among his own contemporaries. But this was the life on which he loved to brood; this was the society with which he spent one half of his time; this was the world which he loved to people with the creatures of his own imagination; and to draw such characters only as the Bennetts and the Bertrams and the Morlands would not have helped him in the realisation of his ideal. But he could not reproduce this state of society on the same terms as if he had sketched it like Jane Austen from the living model. He could not trust exclusively to the private or domestic life of the period which he selected for description, and hence he could not take types of character whose peculiarities were observable only within this narrow range. Of music, we are told that he cared more for the sentiment than the harmony, of which he understood little. A song or a melody which was rich in associations would move him to tears; for scientific music alone he would not have crossed the threshold. So too with the characters in fiction. If he was really to sympathise with them they must waken associations, or touch some sentiment that was dear to him. He could render his homage to Miss Austen without a shade of envy. If her art was beyond his reach, it was also we suspect beyond his ambition. Such novels were pure literature, but the Waverley Novels, as between Scott and himself, were much more than this. They were a grand feudal temple to which the architect could withdraw himself at pleasure to worship his own deities in silence and solitude, or pace the long-drawn aisles in company with barons, knights and courtiers, whose spirits he could evoke at will. When we hear of the "sordid and mercenary motives" of Scott's labours, we know that we are listening to some one who has not the faintest insight into his real mind and character; nor the slightest perception that he could never have written these immortal works for the sake of money alone had they not also furnished him with another world wherein he could revel undisturbed in those waking dreams which represented his social religion.

In all this there was little to do with literature. And whether we are estimating Scott's career as a whole, or the characters and plots belonging to his poems and romances, we must never forget that they had not their origin in any thirst for literary distinction. Scott was a poet, but can hardly be called a genuine man of letters to whom pure literature was an end in itself and

the chief good of life. He was eminently a man of action, a sportsman and a woodman, and would doubtless have made an excellent soldier. All his heart was in the olden time, and in the class of human qualities which are required to mould society into a civilised shape, and to create and consolidate empire. His was the Roman not the Greek ideal of life:

> Excudent alii spirantia mollius æra,
> Credo equidem, vivos ducent de marmore vultus,
> Orabunt causas melius, cœlique meatus
> Describent radio et surgentia sidera dicent:
> Tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento;
> Hæ tibi erunt artes.

To the graces of art and literature, the flowers of poetry and rhetoric which might adorn the fabric when complete, he assigned a lower place. Thus, to repeat what we have said already, he seems as a general rule, to which there are doubtless exceptions, to have exerted his full strength only on those heroines who moved on some great scene of action, and that he did not care to employ himself on the delineation of character exclusively for its own sake, for love of the literary art required for it, or unless it was connected in some way with sentiments and associations far dearer to him than Parnassian laurels.

The publication of Scott's *Diary*, as it has revived the old controversy respecting the mercenary nature of some of his literary work, has suggested some of these remarks. We may be allowed perhaps in conclusion to ask why an author may not devote the proceeds of literature to the furtherance of some great object which he has at heart, instead of either hoarding it, or squandering it on personal indulgence? Scott's object was to found a family, to set up again in the land one of the branches of a great old feudal house; a romantic, and, if any one likes, a foolish purpose, but certainly not a mean or ignoble one; and there has always seemed to ourselves a peculiar fitness in the dedication of the Waverley Novels to the realisation, however imperfect, of the feudal idea. They were inspired by feudalism and owed four-fifths of their success to the "precious habit" in which Scott's genius apparelled it. Our interest in *Waverley* and *Rob Roy*, and even *Redgauntlet*, is as much due to the waning light of feudalism which tints their pages, as our interest in *Ivanhoe* or *The Talisman* is to its meridian splendour. We doubt if there are more than three from which this element is altogether absent. And what more natural, what less in need of forgiveness or excuse, than that the fortune yielded by the fiction should be spent in an endeavour to reanimate the interest represented by it?

A STREET.

It is in the East-end. There is no need to say in the East-end of what. The East-end is a vast city, as famous in its way as any city men have built. But who knows the East-end? It is down through Cornhill and out beyond Leadenhall Street and Aldgate pump, one will say; a shocking place, where he went once with a curate. An evil growth of slums which hide human creeping things; where foul men and women live on penn'orths of gin, where collars and clean shirts are not yet invented, where every citizen wears a black eye, and no man combs his hair. Our street is not in a place like this. The East-end is a place, says another, populated by the unemployed. The unemployed are a race whose token is a clay pipe, and whose enemy is soap. Now and again they migrate bodily to Hyde Park with banners, and furnish surrounding police-courts with disorderly drunkards. Still another knows the East-end only as the place whence come begging letters; where coal and blanket funds are in a state of permanent insolvency, and somebody is always wanting a day in the country. Everybody has his own notion of the East-end,—usually nothing but a distorted conception of some incidental feature of the place. There are foul slums in the East-end of course, just as there are in the West-end; there is want and misery in the East-end, just as there is wherever men and women gather together to fight for food and a roof; but it is not always of a spectacular sort.

There is about one hundred and fifty yards of our street, all of the same pattern. It is not a picturesque street; a dingy little brick house twenty feet high with three square holes to carry the windows and an oblong hole to carry the door is not picturesque; and two or three score of them in a row, with one front wall in common, represent either side of our street and suggests stables.

Round the corner there are a baker's, a chandler's, and a beer-shop, but these are not included in the view from any of the rectangular holes. They are well known, however, to every inhabitant, and the chandler goes to church on Sunday and pays for his seat.

They are not a very noisy or obtrusive lot in our street. They do not go to Hyde Park with banners, and they rarely fight. It is just possible that one or two among them, at some time in this life of ups and downs, may have been indebted to a coal and blanket fund; but the one or two, whosoever they may be, would certainly rather die than admit the disgrace, and probably very nearly did so before submitting to it.

Some of these in our street are in the docks, some in the gasworks, some in one or other of the few remaining Thames shipbuilding yards. Two families in a house is the general rule, there being six rooms behind each set of four holes; unless "young men lodgers" are taken in, or grown up sons pay for their rooms and food.

At half-past five every morning a curious demonstration takes place. The street resounds with thunderous door-knocks, repeated at house after house, and every time responded to by a muffled shout from within. The knocks are the work of the night-watchman or the early policeman, or both, and they awaken the sleepers to go forth to the docks, the gasworks and the shipyards. To be awakened in this fashion costs fourpence a week, and for this fourpence a fierce rivalry rages between the fast disap-

pearing night-watchman and the policeman. The night-watchman is the real professional artist; but he goes to the wall, because, if the pursuit is to pay at all at fourpence a knocker, a large connection must be worked. Now it is not easy to bang at two knockers three-quarters of a mile apart, and a hundred others lying between, each punctually at half-past five. Wherefore the policeman, to whom the fourpence is but a perquisite, and who can do with a smaller connection, is rapidly supplanting the night-watchman, whose cry of "Past nine o'clock" as he collects orders in the evening is now seldom heard, and who predicts speedy national ruin under the present constabulary oligarchy.

The knocking and shouting passes and there comes an opening and shutting of doors and a hastening away to the docks, the gasworks, and the shipyards. Later are heard more door-shutting and the trotting of sorrow-laden little feet along the grim street to the grim Board-school three grim streets off. Then silence, save here and there for a subdued sound of scrubbing, and the ready squall of croupy infants. After this, more trotting of little feet to docks, gasworks and shipyards with father's dinner in a basin and a red handkerchief, and to the Board-school again. More muffled scrubbing and squalling, and perhaps a feeble attempt or two to ameliorate the blankness of one of the square holes by pouring water into a grimy flowerpot full of dirt. Again, the trot of little feet towards the oblong holes, heralding the slower tread of sooty artisans; a smell of bloater up and down; nightfall; the fighting of boys in the street, perhaps of men at the corner near the beer-shop; sleep. And this is the record of a day in our street,—of any day,—of every day.

Of every day excepting Sunday. On Sunday morning a smell of cooking floats round the corner from the half-shut baker's, and the little feet trot down the street under the burden of steaming beef, potatoes, and batter pudding,—the lucky little feet these, with Sunday boots on them, when father has been in good work and brought home all the money; not the poor little feet in worn shoes, carrying little bodies in the threadbare clothes of all the week, when father is out of work, or ill, or drunk, and the Sunday cooking may be done very easily at home,—if any cooking there be.

On Sunday morning one or two heads of families in our street appear in wonderful black suits, with unnumbered creases and wrinklings at the seams. At their sides and about their heels trot the eternal little feet, and from under painful little velvet caps and straw hats stare solemn little faces towelled to a polish. Thus disposed and arranged they proceed gravely through the grim little streets to a grim Little Bethel where are gathered together others in like garb and attendance; and are driven to the Throne of Love with brands of hell-fire.

Most, however, lie, in shirt and trousers upon their beds and read the Sunday paper; while one or two are driven forth from hindering housework to loaf, and await the opening of the beer-shop round the corner. This is Sunday in our street, and every Sunday is the same as every other Sunday, making an agreeable break in the week, which would otherwise grow monotonous. For the women, however, Sunday is much as other days, beyond that there is a little more work on the Day of Rest. The break in the regular round of the women's week is washing day.

No event of the outer world makes any impression on this street. Nations may rise, totter, and fall in ruins, but the colourless day will work through its twenty-four hours just as it did yesterday and will do to-morrow. Without there may be party strife, wars and rumours of wars, public rejoicings, but the trotting of the little feet will neither be quickened nor checked. Those quaint little women, the girl-children of our street, who use

a motherly management and patronage of all under their own age and of boys as old or older, with "Bless the child!" or "Drat the children,"—these quaint little women will still market with big baskets and regard the price of bacon as the chief of human considerations. Nothing disturbs this street,—nothing but a strike.

Nobody laughs in our street,—life is too serious a thing—nobody sings. There was a woman who sang once,—a young wife from the country. But she bore children, and her voice cracked; then her man died, and she sang no more. They took away her home, and with her children about her skirts the woman left our street for ever. The other women did not think much of her. She was "helpless."

One of the square holes in this street,—one of the single, ground-floor holes—is seen, on individual examination, to differ from the others. There has been an attempt to make it into a shop-window. Half-a-dozen candles, a few sickly sugarsticks, certain shrivelled bloaters, some boot-laces, and a bundle or two of firewood compose the stock, which at night is lighted sometimes by a little paraffin lamp in a tin sconce, and sometimes by a candle. A widow lives here,—a gaunt, bony widow with sunken red eyes. She has other sources of income besides the candles and bootlaces; she washes and chars at daytime, and sews cheap shirts at night. Two "young men lodgers," moreover, sleep up stairs, and the children sleep in the back room; the widow is supposed not to sleep at all. The policeman does not knock here in the morning—the widow wakes the lodgers herself; and nobody in the street behind ever looks out of window before going to bed, no matter how late, without seeing a light in the widow's room where she plies her needle. She is a quiet woman who speaks little with her neighbours,—having other things to do; a woman of pronounced character, to whom it would be inadvisable to offer coals or blankets—even dangerous. Hers was the greatest contempt for the helpless woman who sang, a contempt with an added bitterness which might be traced to its source, could a man read hearts. Twice, when the singing woman marketed, which door of the pawnshop had she met the widow coming from?

This is not a dirty street, taken as a whole. The widow's house is one of the cleanest, and the widow's children match the house. The only cleaner house than the widow's is kept in order by a despotic Scotchwoman, who makes her husband take off his boots on the front step, and rubs the door handle after any hand has rested upon it. The Scotchwoman has made several attempts to accommodate "young men lodgers," which have ended in shrill disturbances.

There is no house without children in this street, and their number is added to unceasingly. Nine-tenths of the doctor's visits are on this account alone, and the constant recruiting of the street's population is the chief matter of the little conversation of the women across back-yard fences. One after another the little strangers come, to live through identical lives, as flat and colourless as the life of a day in our street. Life dawns, and the doctor-watchman's door-knock resounds along the row of rectangular holes. Then a muffled cry announces that the small life is awake, ready to trudge and sweat along the appointed groove. Later, the trotting of little feet and the school; the midday play hour, when love peeps even into our street; after that more trotting of little feet,—strange little feet, new little feet—and the scrubbing, and the squalling, and the barren flower-pot. The end of the sooty day's work; the last return home; nightfall; sleep.

In the brightest hour of this mean life, when love's light falls into some corner of our street, it is but a dusty ray. It comes early, because it is the only bright thing the street sees, and is looked and longed for. Lads and lasses walk awkwardly arm-linked down our street, before interest in

marbles and doll-houses would have quite left them in a brighter place. "keeping company." The manner of this proceeding is unknown elsewhere; it might be a betrothal custom of a foreign country. The young people first "walk out" in pairs. There is no exchange of promises, no troth-plight, no engagement, no love-talk. They patrol the streets side by side, usually in silence, sometimes with vacuous chatter. There are no dances, no tennis or water-parties, no picnics to bring them together, so they must walk out. If two who walk out become dissatisfied with each other's company, nothing is easier than to separate and walk out with others. When by these means each has found a fit mate, or thinks so, a keeper-ring is bought and the odd association becomes a regular engagement; but usually not until the walking out has lasted for many months. The two stages of courtship are spoken of indiscriminately as "keeping company," but a very careful distinction is drawn between them by the parties. Nevertheless it would be almost as great a breach of faith for either, in the walking out period, to walk out with more than one, as if the actual engagement had been made. The love-making of our street is a dreary thing, when one thinks of the love-making in other places. It begins too soon, and ends too soon.

Nobody from this street goes to the theatre. That would involve a long journey, and cost money which might buy bread and beer and boots. For those who wear black Sunday suits it would also be sinful. Nobody reads poetry or romance. Nobody knows who Fielding, Thackeray, or Byron were, and no man need fear contradiction if he announce Titus Oates as author of the Waverley Novels. A Sunday paper in a house or two provides all the reading our street is disposed for. Now and again a penny novel has been found among the private treasures of a growing daughter and has been wrathfully confiscated. The air of our street is not favourable to the ideal.

Yet there seem to be aspirations. There has lately come into the street a young man lodger who belongs to a Mutual Improvement Society. Membership in this Society is regarded as a sort of learned degree, and at its meetings debates are held and papers smugly read by lamentably self-satisfied young men lodgers, whose only preparation for debating and writing is fathomless ignorance. How should it be otherwise with the life they have led, seeing nothing, reading nothing, learning nothing?

Where in the East-end lies this street? Everywhere; our hundred and fifty yards is only a fragment, only a turn in the maze. The street with the square holes is hundreds of miles long. That it is planned in short lengths is true, but there is no other street in the world more rightfully to be called a single street because of its dismal sameness, its sordid uniformity. A Palace of Delight was once set in the midst of this street, but Commissioners brandished their pens over it and it became a Polytechnic Institution, whereat all the young men lodgers might crowd to carry into evening the dock and shipyard work of the day, and learn the more efficiently to fight with each other for the eternally desired bread and beer and boots. There is no delight in this street.

ARTHUR MORRISON.

HIS PRIVATE HONOUR.

THE autumn batch of recruits for the Old Regiment had just been uncarted. As usual they were said to be the worst draft that had ever come from the Depot. Mulvaney looked them over, grunted scornfully, and immediately reported himself very sick.

"Is it the regular autumn fever?" said the doctor, who knew something of Terence's ways. "Your temperature's normal."

"'Tis a hundred and thirty-seven rookies to the bad, sorr. I'm not very sick now, but I will be dead if these boys are thrown at me in my rejuced condition. Doctor, dear, supposin' you was in charge of three cholera camps an'——"

"Go to hospital then, you old contriver," said the doctor laughing.

Terence bundled himself into a blue bedgown,—Dinah Shadd was away attending to a major's lady, who preferred Dinah without a diploma to anybody else with a hundred—put a pipe in his teeth, and paraded the hospital balcony exhorting Ortheris to be a father to the new recruits.

"They're mostly your own sort, little man," he said with a grin; "the top-spit av Whitechapel. I'll interogue them when they're more like something they never will be,—an' that's a good honest soldier like me."

Ortheris yapped indignantly. He knew as well as Terence what the coming work meant, and he thought Terence's conduct mean. Then he strolled off to look at the new cattle, who were staring at the unfamiliar landscape with large eyes, and asking if the kites were eagles and the pariah-dogs jackals.

"Well, you are a holy set of bean-faced beggars, *you* are," he said genially to a knot in the barrack square. Then running his eye over them,—"Fried fish an' whelks is about your sort. Blimy if they haven't sent some pink-eyed Jews too. You chap with the greasy 'ed, which o' the Solomons was your father, Moses?"

"My name's Anderson," said a voice sullenly.

"Oh, Samuelson! All right, Samuelson! An' how many o' the likes o' you Sheenies are comin' to spoil B. Company?"

There is no scorn so complete as that of the old soldier for the new. It is right that this should be so. A recruit must learn first that he is not a man but a thing, which in time, and the mercy of heaven, may develope into a soldier of the Queen if it takes care and attends to good advice. Ortheris's tunic was open, his cap over-lopped one eye, and his hands were behind his back as he walked round, growing more contemptuous at each step. The recruits did not dare to answer, for they were new boys in a strange school, who had called themselves soldiers at the Depot in comfortable England.

"Not a single pair o' shoulders in the whole lot. I've seen some bad drafts in my time,—some bloomin' bad drafts; but this 'ere draft beats any draft I've ever known. Jock, come an' look at these squidgy, ham-shanked beggars."

Learoyd was walking across the square. He arrived slowly, circled round the knot as a whale circles round a shoal of small fry, said nothing, and went away whistling.

"Yes, you may well look sheepy," Ortheris squeaked to the boys. "It's the likes of you breaks the 'earts of the likes of us. We've got to lick you into shape, and never a ha'penny extry do we get for so doin', and you ain't never grateful neither. Don't you go

thinkin' it's the Colonel nor yet the company orf'cer that makes you. It's me, you Johnny Raws—you Johnnie *bloomin'* Raws!"

A company officer had come up unperceived behind Ortheris at the end of this oration. "You may be right, Ortheris," he said quietly, "but I shouldn't shout it." The recruits grinned as Ortheris saluted and collapsed.

Some days afterwards I was privileged to look over the new batch, and they were everything that Ortheris had said, and more. B. Company had been devastated by forty or fifty of them; and B. Company's drill on parade was a sight to shudder at. Ortheris asked them lovingly whether they had not been sent out by mistake, and whether they had not better post themselves back to their friends. Learoyd thrashed them methodically one by one, without haste but without slovenliness; and the older soldiers took the remnants from Learoyd and went over them in their own fashion. Mulvaney stayed in hospital, and grinned from the balcony when Ortheris called him a shirker and other worse names.

"By the grace av God we'll brew men av them yet," Terence said one day. "Be vartuous an' parsevere, me son. There's the makin's av colonels in that mob if we only go deep enough—wid a belt."

"We!" Ortheris replied, dancing with rage. "I just like you and your 'we's.' 'Ere's B. Company drillin' like a drunk Militia reg'ment."

"So I've been officially acquent," was the answer from on high; "but I'm too sick this tide to make certain."

"An' you, you fat H'irishman, shiftin' an' shirkin' up there among the arrerroot an' the sago."

"*An'* the port wine,—you've forgot the port wine, Orth'ris; it's none so bad." Terence smacked his lips provokingly.

"And we're wore off our feet with these 'ere,—kangaroos. Come out o' that, an' earn your pay. Come on down outer that, an' *do* somethin' 'stead o' grinnin' up there like a Jew monkey, you frowsy-'eaded Fenian."

"When I'm better av my various complaints I'll have a little private talkin' wid you. In the meanwhile,—duck!"

Terence flung an empty medicine bottle at Ortheris's head and dropped into a long chair, and Ortheris came to tell me his opinion of Mulvaney three times over,—each time entirely varying all the words.

"There'll be a smash one o' these days," he concluded. "Well, it's none o' my fault, but it's 'ard on B. Company."

It was very hard on B. Company, for twenty seasoned men cannot push twice that number of fools into their places and keep their own places at the same time. The recruits should have been more evenly distributed through the regiment, but it seemed good to the Colonel to mass them in a company where there was a large proportion of old soldiers. He found his reward early one morning when the battalion was advancing by companies in echelon from the right. The order was given to form company squares, which are compact little bricks of men very unpleasant for a line of charging cavalry to deal with. B. Company was on the left flank, and had ample time to know what was going on. For that reason presumably it gathered itself into a thing like a decayed aloe-clump, the bayonets pointing anywhere in general and nowhere in particular, and in that clump, roundel, or mob, it stayed till the dust had gone down and the Colonel could see and speak. He did both, and the speaking part was admitted by the regiment to be the finest thing that the "old man" had ever risen to since one delightful day at a sham-fight, when a cavalry division had occasion to walk over his line of skirmishers. He said, almost weeping, that he had given no order for rallying groups, and that he preferred to see a little dressing among the men

occasionally. He then apologised for having mistaken B. Company for men. He said that they were but weak little children, and that since he could not offer them each a perambulator and a nursemaid (this may sound comic to read, but B. Company heard it by word of mouth and winced) perhaps the best thing for them to do would be to go back to squad drill. To that end he proposed sending them, out of their turn, to garrison duty in Fort Amara, five miles away,—D. Company were next for this detestable duty and nearly cheered the Colonel. There he devoutly hoped that their own subalterns would drill them to death, as they were no use in their present life.

It was an exceedingly painful scene, and I made haste to be near B. Company barracks when parade was dismissed and the men were free to talk. There was no talking at first because each old soldier took a new draft and kicked him very severely. The non-commissioned officers had neither eyes nor ears for these accidents. They left the barracks to themselves, and Ortheris improved the occasion by a speech. I did not hear that speech, but fragments of it were quoted for weeks afterwards. It covered the birth, parentage, and education of every man in the company by name: it gave a complete account of Fort Amara from a sanitary and social point of view; and it wound up with an abstract of the whole duty of a soldier, each recruit his use in life, and Ortheris's views on the use and fate of the recruits of B. Company.

"You can't drill, you can't walk, you can't shoot,—you,—you awful rookies! Wot's the good of you? You eats and you sleeps, and you eats, and you goes to the doctor for medicine when your innards is out o' order for all the world as if you was bloomin' generals. An' now you've topped it all, you bats'-eyed beggars, with getting us druv out to that stinkin' Fort 'Ammerer. We'll fort you when we get out there; yes, an' we'll 'ammer you too. Don't you think you've come into the H'army to drink Heno, an' clot your comp'ny, an' lie on your cots an' scratch your fat heads. You can do that at 'ome sellin' matches, which is all you're fit for, you keb-huntin', penny-toy, bootlace, baggage-tout, 'orse-'oldin' sandwich-backed se-werss, you.[1] I've spoke you as fair as I know 'ow, and you give good 'eed, 'cause if Mulvaney stops skrimshanking—gets out o' 'orspital—when we're in the Fort, I lay your lives will be trouble to you."

That was Ortheris's peroration, and it caused B. Company to be christened the Boot-black Brigade. With this disgrace on their slack shoulders they went to garrison duty at Fort Amara under three officers who were under instructions to twist their little tails. The army, unlike every other profession, cannot be taught through shilling books. First a man must suffer, then he must learn his work, and the self-respect that that knowledge brings. The learning is hard, in a land where our army is not a red thing that walks down the street to be looked at, but a living, tramping reality liable to be needed at the shortest notice, when there is no time to say, "Hadn't you better?" and "Won't you please?"

The company officers divided themselves into three. When Brander the captain was wearied, he gave over to Maydew, and when Maydew was hoarse he ordered the junior subaltern Ouless to bucket the men through squad and company drill, till Brander could go on again. Out of parade hours the old soldiers spoke to the recruits as old soldiers will, and between the four forces at work on them, the new draft began to stand on their feet and feel that they belonged to a good and honourable service. This was proved by their once or twice resenting Ortheris's technical lectures.

"Drop it now, lad," said Learoyd coming to the rescue. "Th' pups are biting back. They're none so rotten as we looked for."

[1] Ortheris meant *soors*—which means pigs.

"Ho! Yes You think yourself soldiers now, 'cause you don't fall over each other on p'rade, don't you? You think 'cause the dirt don't cake off you week's end to week's end that you're clean men. You think 'cause you can fire your rifle without more nor shuttin' both eyes, you're something to fight, don't you? You'll know later on," said Ortheris to the barrack-room generally. "Not but what you're a little better than you was," he added, with a gracious wave of his cutty.

It was in this transition-stage that I came across the new draft once more. Their officers, in the zeal of youth forgetting that the old soldiers who stiffened the sections must suffer equally with the raw material under hammering, had made all a little stale and unhandy with continuous drill in the square, instead of marching the men into the open and supplying them with skirmishing drill. The month of garrison-duty in the Fort was nearly at an end, and B. Company were quite fit for a self-respecting regiment to drill with. They had no style or spring,—that would come in time—but so far as they went they were passable. I met Maydew one day and inquired after their health. He told me that young Ouless was putting a polish on a half-company of them in the great square by the east bastion of the Fort that afternoon. Because the day was Saturday I went off to taste the full beauty of leisure in watching another man hard at work.

The fat forty-pound muzzle-loaders on the east bastion made a very comfortable resting-place. You could sprawl full length on the iron warmed by the afternoon sun to blood heat, and command an easy view of the parade ground which lay between the powder-magazine and the curtain of the bastion.

I saw a half-company called over and told off for drill, saw Ouless come from his quarters, lugging at his gloves, and heard the first *'shun*! that locks the ranks and shows that work has begun. Then I went off on my own thoughts, the squeaking of the boots and the rattle of the rifles making a good accompaniment, and the line of red coats and black trousers a suitable background to them all. They concerned the formation of a territorial army for India,—an army of specially paid men enlisted for twelve years' service in her Majesty's Indian possessions, with the option of extending on medical certificates for another five and the certainty of a pension at the end. They would be such an army as the world had never seen,—one hundred thousand trained men drawing annually five, no, fifteen thousand men from England, making India their home, and allowed to marry in reason. Yes, I thought, watching the line shift to and fro, break and re-form, we would buy back Cashmere from the drunken imbecile who was turning it into a hell, and there we would plant our much-married regiments,—the men who had served ten years of their time, —and there they should breed us white soldiers, and perhaps a second fighting-line of Eurasians. At all events Cashmere was the only place in India that the Englishman could colonise, and if we had foot-hold there we could . . . Oh, it was a beautiful dream! I left that territorial army swelled to a quarter of a million men far behind and swept on as far as an independent India, hiring warships from the mother country, guarding Aden on the one side and Singapore on the other, paying interest on her loans with beautiful regularity, but borrowing no men from beyond her own borders—a colonised, manufacturing India with a permanent surplus and her own flag. I had just installed myself as Viceroy, and by virtue of my office had shipped four million sturdy, thrifty natives to the Malayan Archipelago, where labour is always wanted and the Chinese pour in too quickly, when I became aware that things were not going smoothly with the half-company. There was a great deal too much shuffling and shifting and "as you were-ing." The non-commissioned officers were snapping at the men, and I fancied Ouless backed

one of his orders with an oath. He was in no position to do this, because he was a junior who had not yet learned to pitch his word of command in the same key twice running. Sometimes he squeaked, and sometimes he grunted, and a clear full voice with a ring in it has more to do with drill than people think. He was nervous both on parade and in mess, because he was unproven and knew it. One of his majors had said in his hearing, "Ouless has a skin or two to slough yet, and he hasn't the sense to be aware of it." That remark had stayed in Ouless's mind and caused him to think about himself in little things, which is not the best training for a young man. He tried to be cordial at mess, and became over-effusive. Then he tried to stand on his dignity, and appeared sulky and boorish. He was only hunting for the just medium and the proper note, and had found neither because he had never faced himself in a big thing. With his men he was as ill at ease as he was with his mess, and his voice betrayed him. I heard two orders and then:—"Sergeant, what *is* that rear-rank man doing, damn him?" That was sufficiently bad. A company officer ought not to ask sergeants for information. He commands, and commands are not held by syndicates.

It was too dusty to see the drill accurately, but I could hear the excited little voice pitching from octave to octave, and the uneasy ripple of badgered or bad-tempered files running down the ranks. Ouless had come on parade as sick of his duty as were the men of theirs. The hot sun had told on everybody's temper, but most of all on the youngest man's. He had evidently lost his self-control, and not possessing the nerve or the knowledge to break off till he had recovered it again, was making bad worse by ill-language.

The men shifted their ground and came close under the gun I was lying on. They were wheeling quarter-right and they did it very badly, in the natural hope of hearing Ouless swear again. He could have taught them nothing new, but they enjoyed the exhibition. Instead of swearing Ouless lost his head completely, and struck out nervously at the wheeling flank-man with a little Malacca riding-cane that he held in his hand for a pointer. The cane was topped with thin silver over lacquer, and the silver had worn through in one place, leaving a triangular flap sticking up. I had just time to see that Ouless had thrown away his commission by striking a soldier, when I heard the rip of cloth and a piece of grey shirt showed under the torn scarlet on the man's shoulder. It had been the merest nervous flick of an exasperated boy, but quite enough to forfeit his commission, since it had been dealt in anger to a volunteer and no pressed man, who could not under the rules of the service reply. The result of it, thanks to the natural depravity of things, was as though Ouless had cut the man's coat off his back. Knowing the new draft by reputation, I was fairly certain that every one of them would swear with many oaths that Ouless had actually thrashed the man. In that case Ouless would do well to pack his trunk. His career as a servant of the Queen in any capacity was ended. The wheel continued, and the men halted and dressed immediately opposite my resting-place. Ouless's face was perfectly bloodless. The flanking man was a dark red, and I could see his lips moving in wicked words. He was Ortheris! After seven years' service and three medals, he had been struck by a boy younger than himself! Further, he was my friend and a good man, a proved man, and an Englishman. The shame of the thing made me as hot as it made Ouless cold, and if Ortheris had slipped in a cartridge and cleared the account at once I should have rejoiced. The fact that Ortheris, of all men, had been struck, proved that the boy could not have known whom he was hitting; but he should have remembered that he was no longer a boy. And then I was sorry for him, and then I was angry

again, and Ortheris stared in front of him and grew redder and redder.

The drill halted for a moment. No one knew why, for not three men could have seen the insult, the wheel being end-on to Ouless at the time. Then, led I conceived by the hand of Fate, Brander, the captain, crossed the drill-ground, and his eye was caught by not more than a square foot of grey shirt over a shoulder-blade that should have been covered by well-fitting tunic.

"Heavens and earth!" he said, crossing in three strides. "Do you let your men come on parade in rags, sir? What's that scare-crow doing here? Fall out that flank, man. What do you mean by——You, Ortheris! of all men. What the deuce do you mean?"

"Beg y' pardon, sir," said Ortheris. "I scratched it against the guard-gate running up to parade."

"Scratched it! Ripped it up, you mean. It's half off your back."

"It was a little tear at first, sir, but in portin' arms it got stretched, sir, an'—an' I can't look behind me. I felt it givin', sir."

"Hm!" said Brander. "I should think you did feel it give. I thought it was one of the new draft. You've a good pair of shoulders. Go on!"

He turned to go. Ouless stepped after him, very white, and said something in a low voice.

"Hey, what? What! Ortheris," the voice dropped. I saw Ortheris salute, say something, and stand at attention.

"Dismiss," said Brander curtly. The men were dismissed. "I can't make this out. You say——?" he nodded at Ouless, who said something again. Ortheris stood still, the torn flap of his tunic falling nearly to his waist-belt. He had, as Brander said, a good pair of shoulders, and prided himself on the fit of his tunic.

"Beg y' pardon, sir," I heard him say, "but I think Lieutenant Ouless has been in the sun too long. He don't quite remember things, sir. I come on p'rade with a bit of a rip, and it spread, sir, through portin' arms as I have said, sir."

Brander looked from one face to the other and I suppose drew his own conclusions, for he told Ortheris to go with the other men who were flocking back to barracks. Then he spoke to Ouless and went away, leaving the boy in the middle of the parade-ground fumbling with his sword-knot.

He looked up, saw me lying on the gun, and came to me biting the back of his gloved forefinger, so completely thrown off his balance that he had not sense enough to keep his trouble to himself.

"I say, you saw that, I suppose?" He jerked his head back to the square, where the dust left by the departing men was settling down in white circles.

"I did," I answered, for I was not feeling polite.

"What the devil ought I to do?" He bit his finger again. "I told Brander what I had done. I hit him."

"I'm perfectly aware of that," I said, "and I don't suppose Ortheris has forgotten it already."

"Ye—es; but I'm dashed if I know what I ought to do. Exchange into another company, I suppose. I can't ask the man to exchange, I suppose. Hey?"

The suggestion showed the glimmerings of proper sense, but he should not have come to me or any one else for help. It was his own affair, and I told him so. He seem unconvinced, and began to talk of the possibilities of being cashiered. At this point the spirit moved me, on behalf of the unavenged Ortheris, to paint him a beautiful picture of his insignificance in the scheme of creation. He had a papa and a mamma seven thousand miles away, and perhaps some friends. They would feel his disgrace, but no one else would care a penny. He would be only Lieutenant Ouless of the Old Regiment dismissed the

Queen's service for conduct unbecoming an officer and a gentleman. The Commander-in-Chief, who would confirm the orders of the court-martial, would not know who he was; his mess would not speak of him; he would return to Bombay, if he had money enough to go home, more alone than when he had come out. Finally, —I rounded the sketch with precision —he was only one tiny dab of red in the vast grey field of the Indian Empire. He must work this crisis out alone, and no one could help him and no one cared,—(this was untrue, because I cared immensely; he had spoken the truth to Brander on the spot)—whether he pulled through it or did not pull through it. At last his face set and his figure stiffened.

"Thanks, that's quite enough. I don't want to hear any more," he said in a dry, grating voice, and went to his own quarters.

Brander spoke to me afterwards and asked me some absurd questions as to whether I had seen Ouless cut the coat off Ortheris's back. I knew that jagged sliver of silver would do its work well, but I contrived to impress on Brander the completeness, the wonderful completeness of my disassociation from that drill. I began to tell him all about my dreams for the new territorial army in India, and he left me.

I could not see Ortheris for some days, but was told that when he returned to his fellows, he had told the story of the blow in vivid language. Samuelson, the Jew, then asserted that it was not good enough to live in a regiment where you were drilled off your feet and knocked about like a dog. The remark was a perfectly innocent one, and exactly tallied with Ortheris's expressed opinions. Yet Ortheris had called Samuelson an unmentionable Jew, had accused him of kicking women on the head in London, and howling under the cat, had hustled him, as a bantam hustles a barn-door cock, from one end of the barrack-room to the other and finally had heaved every single article in Samuelson's valise and bedding-roll into the verandah and the outer dirt, kicking Samuelson every time that the bewildered creature stooped to pick anything up. My informant could not account for this inconsistency, but it seemed to me that Ortheris was working off his temper.

Mulvaney had heard the story in hospital. First his face clouded, then he spat, and then he laughed. I suggested that he had better return to active duty, but he saw it in another light, and told me that Ortheris was quite capable of looking after himself and his own affairs. "An' if I did come out," said Terence, "like as not I would be catchin' young Ouless by the scruff av his trousies an' makin' an example av him before the men. Whin Dinah came back I would be under court-martial, an' all for the sake av a little bit av a bhoy that'll make an orf'cer yet. What's he goin' to do, sorr, do ye know?"

"Which?" said I.

"Ouless, av course. I've no fear for the *man*. Begad, tho', if ut had come to me—but it could not have so come—I'd ha' made him cut his wisdom-teeth on his own sword-hilt."

"I don't think he knows himself what he means to do," I said.

"I should not wonder," said Terence. "There's a dale av thinkin' before a young man whin he's done wrong an' knows ut, an' is studyin' how to put ut right. Give the word from me to our little man there, that if he had ha' told on his shuperior orf'cer I'd ha' come out to Fort Amara to kick him into the Fort ditch, an' that's a forty-fut drop."

Ortheris was not in good condition to talk to. He wandered up and down with Learoyd brooding, so far as I could see, over his lost honour, and using, as I could hear, incendiary language. Learoyd would nod and spit and smoke and nod again, and he must have been a great comfort to Ortheris—almost as great a comfort as Samuelson, whom Ortheris bullied

disgracefully. If the Jew opened his mouth in the most casual remark Ortheris would plunge down it with all arms and accoutrements, while the barrack-room stared and wondered.

Ouless had retired into himself to meditate. I saw him now and again, and he avoided me because I had witnessed his shame and spoken my mind on it. He seemed dull and moody, and found his half-company anything but pleasant to drill. The men did their work and gave him very little trouble, but just when they should have been feeling their feet, and showing that they felt them by spring and swing and snap, the elasticity died out, and it was like drilling with war-game blocks. There is a beautiful little ripple in a well-made line of men exactly like the play of a perfectly-tempered sword. Ouless's half-company moved like a broomstick, and would have broken as easily.

I was speculating whether Ouless had sent money to Ortheris, which would have been bad, or had apologised to him in private, which would have been worse, or had decided to let the whole affair slide, which would have been worst of all, when orders came to me to leave the station for a while. I had not spoken directly to Ortheris, for his honour was not my honour, and he was its only guardian, and he would not say anything except bad words.

I went away, and from time to time thought a great deal of that subaltern and that private in Fort Amara, and wondered what would be the upshot of everything.

When I returned it was early spring. B. Company had been shifted from the Fort to regular duty in cantonments, the roses were getting ready to bud on the Mall, and the regiment, which had been at a camp of exercise among other things, was going through its spring musketry-course under an adjutant who had a notion that its shooting average was low. He had stirred up the company officers and they had brought extra ammunition for their men—the Government allowance is just sufficient to force the rifling—and E. Company, which counted many marksmen, was vapouring and offering to challenge all the other companies, and the third-class shots were very sorry that they had ever been born, and all the subalterns were a rich ripe saddle-colour from sitting at the butts six or eight hours a day.

I went off to the butts after breakfast very full of curiosity to see how the new draft had come forward. Ouless was there with his men by the bald hillock that marks the six hundred yards range, and the men were in gray-green *khaki*, that shows the best points of a soldier and shades off into every background he may stand against. Before I was in hearing distance I could see, as they sprawled on the dusty grass, or stood up and shook themselves, that they were men made over again—wearing their helmets with the cock of self-possession, swinging easily, and jumping to the word of command. Coming nearer, I heard Ouless whistling *Ballyhooley* between his teeth as he looked down the range with his binoculars, and the back of Lieutenant Ouless was the back of a free man and an officer. He nodded as I came up, and I heard him fling an order to a non-commissioned officer in a sure and certain voice. The flag ran up from the target, and Ortheris flung himself down on his stomach to put in his ten shots. He winked at me over the breech-block as he settled himself, with the air of a man who has to go through tricks for the benefit of children.

"Watch, you men," said Ouless to the squad behind. "He's half your weight, Brannigan, but he isn't afraid of his rifle."

Ortheris had his little affectations and pet ways as the rest of us have. He weighed his rifle, gave it a little kick-up, cuddled down again, and fired across the ground that was beginning to dance in the sun-heat.

"Miss!" said a man behind.

"Too much bloomin' back-ground in front," Ortheris muttered.

"I should give two feet for refraction," said Ouless.

Ortheris fired again, made his outer, crept in, found the bull and stayed there, the non-commissioned officer pricking off the shots.

"Can't make out 'ow I missed that first," he said, rising, and stepping back to my side, as Learoyd took his place.

"Is it company practice?" I asked.

"No. Only just knockin' about. Ouless, 'e's givin' ten rupees for second-class shots. I'm outer it, of course, but I come on to show 'em the proper style o' doin' things. Jock looks like a sea-lion at the Brighton Aquarium sprawlin' an' crawlin' down there, don't 'e? Gawd, what a butt this end of 'im would make."

"B. Company has come up very well," I said.

"They 'ad to. They're none so dusty now, are they? Samuelson even, 'e can shoot sometimes. We're gettin' on as well as can be expected, thank you."

"How do you get on with——?"

"Oh, 'im! First-rate! There's nothin' wrong with 'im."

"Was it all settled then?"

"'Asn't Terence told you? I should say it was. 'E's a gentleman, 'e is."

"Let's hear," I said.

Ortheris twinkled all over, tucked his rifle across his knees and repeated, "'E's a gentleman. 'E's an officer too. You saw all that mess in Fort 'ammerer. 'Twasn't none o' *my* fault, as you can guess. Only some goat in the drill judged it was behaviour or something to play the fool on p'rade. That's why we drilled so bad. When 'e 'it me, I was so took aback I couldn't do nothing, an' when I wished for to knock 'im down the wheel 'ad gone on, an' I was facin' you there lyin' on the guns. After the captain had come up an' was raggin' me about my tunic bein' tore, I saw the young beggar's eye, an' 'fore I could 'elp myself I begun to lie like a good 'un. You 'eard that? It was quite instinkive, but, my! I was in a lather. Then *he* said to the captain, 'I struck 'im!' sez 'e, an' I 'eard Brander whistle, an' then I come out with a new set o' lies all about portin' arms an' 'ow the rip growed, such as you 'eard. I done that too before I knew where I was. Then I give Samuelson whatfor in barricks when he was dismissed. You should ha' seen 'is kit by the time I'd finished with it. It was all over the bloomin' Fort! Then me an' Jock went off to Mulvaney in 'orspital, five-mile walk, an' I was hoppin' mad. Ouless, 'e knowed it was court-marshal for me if I 'it 'im back—'e *must* ha' knowed. Well, I sez to Terence, whisperin' under the 'orspital balcony —'Terence,' sez I, 'what in 'ell am I to do?' I told 'im all about the row same as you saw. Terence 'e whistles like a bloomin' old bullfinch up there in 'orspital, an' 'e sez, 'You ain't to blame,' sez 'e. 'Strewth,' sez I, 'd'you suppose I've come 'ere five mile in the sun to take blame?' I sez. 'I want that young beggar's hide took off. I ain't a bloomin' conscript,' I sez. 'I'm a private servin' of the Queen, an' as good a man as 'e is,' I sez, 'for all 'is commission an' 'is airs an' 'is money,' sez I."

"What a fool you were," I interrupted. Ortheris, being neither a menial nor an American, but a free man, had no excuse for yelping.

"That's exactly what Terence said. I wonder you sot it the same way so pat if 'e 'asn't been talkin' to you. 'E sez to me—'You ought to have more sense,' 'e sez, 'at your time of life. What differ do it make to you,' 'e sez, 'whether 'e 'as a commission or no commission? That's none o' your affair. It's between man an' man, 'e sez, 'if 'e 'eld a general's commission. Moreover,' 'e sez, 'you don't look 'andsome 'oppin' about on your 'ind legs like that. Take him away Jock.' Then 'e went inside, an' that's all I got outer Terence. Jock, 'e sez as slow as a march in slow time,—'Stanley,' 'e sez, 'that young beggar didn't *go* for to 'it you.' 'I don't give

a dam whether 'e did or 'e didn't. 'It me 'e did,' I sez. 'Then you've only got to report to Brander,' sez Jock. 'What d'yer take me for?' I sez, as I was so mad I nearly 'it Jock. An' he got me by the neck an' shoved my 'ead into a bucket o' water in the cook-'ouse an' then we went back to the Fort, an' I give Samuelson a little more trouble with 'is kit. 'E sez to me, '*I* haven't been strook without hittin' back.' 'Well, you're goin' to be now,' I sez, an' I give 'im one or two for 'isself, an' arxed 'im very polite to 'it back, but he didn't. I'd a killed 'im if 'e 'ad. That did me a lot o' good.

"Ouless 'e didn't make no show for some days,—not till after you was gone; an' I was feelin' sick an' miserable, an' didn't know what I wanted, 'cept to black his little eyes good. I 'oped 'e might send me some money for my tunic. Then I'd ha' had it out with him on p'rade and took my chance. Terence was in 'orspital still, you see, an' 'e wouldn't give me no advice.

"The day after you left, Ouless come across me carrying a bucket on fatigue, an' 'e sez to me very quietly, 'Ortheris, you've got to come out shootin' with me,' 'e sez. I felt like to bunging the bucket in 'is eye, but I didn't. I got ready to go instead. Oh, 'e's a gentleman! We went out together, neither sayin' nothin' to the other till we was well out into the jungle beyond the river with 'igh grass all round,—pretty near that place where I went off my 'ead with you. Then 'e puts his gun down an' sez very quietly: 'Ortheris, I struck you on p'rade,' 'e sez. 'Yes, sir,' sez I, 'you did.' 'I've been studying it out by myself,' 'e sez. 'Oh, you 'ave, 'ave you?' sez I to myself, 'an' a nice time you've been about it, you bun-faced little beggar.' 'Yes, sir?' sez I. 'What made you screen me?' 'e sez. 'I don't know,' I sez, an' no more I did, nor do. 'I can't ask you to exchange,' 'e sez. 'An' I don't want to exchange myself,' sez 'e. 'What's comin' now?' I thinks to myself. 'Yes, sir,' sez I. He looked round at the 'igh grass all about, an' 'e sez to himself more than to me,—'I've got to go through it alone, by myself!' 'E looked so queer for a minute that, s'elp me, I thought the little beggar was going to pray. Then he turned round again an' 'e sez, 'What do you think yourself?' 'e sez. 'I don't quite see what you mean, sir,' I sez. 'What would you like?' 'e sez. An' I thought for a minute 'e was goin' to give me money, but 'e run 'is 'and up to the top-button of 'is shootin' coat an' loosed it. 'Thank you, sir,' I sez. 'I'd like that very well,' I sez, an' both our coats was off an' put down."

"Hooray!" I shouted incautiously.

"Don't make a noise on the butts," said Ouless from the shooting-place. "It puts the men off."

I apologised, and Ortheris went on.

"Our coats was off, an' 'e sez, 'Are you ready?' sez 'e. 'Come on then.' I come on, a bit uncertain at first, but he took me one under the chin that warmed me up. I wanted to mark the little beggar an' I hit high, but he went an' jabbed me over the heart like a good one. He wasn't so strong as me, but he knew more, an' in about two minutes I calls 'Time.' 'E steps back,—it was in-fightin' then: 'Come on when you're ready,' 'e sez; and when I had my wind I come on again, an' I got 'im one on the nose that painted 'is little aristocratic white shirt for 'im. That fetched 'im, an' I knew it quicker nor light. He come all round me, close fightin', goin' steady for my heart. I held on all I could an' split 'is ear, but then I began to hiccup, an' the game was up. I come in to feel if I could throw 'im, an' 'e got me one on the mouth that downed me an'—look 'ere!"

Ortheris raised the left corner of his upper lip. An eye-tooth was wanting.

"'E stood over me an' 'e sez, 'Have you 'ad enough?' 'e sez. 'Thank you, I 'ave,' sez I. He took my 'and an' pulled me up, an' I was pretty shook. 'Now,' 'e sez, 'I'll apologise for 'ittin'

you. It was all my fault,' 'e sez, 'an' it wasn't meant for you.' 'I knowed that, sir,' I sez, 'an' there's no need for no apology.' 'Then it's an accident,' 'e sez; 'an' you must let me pay for the coat. Else it'll be stopped out o' your pay.' I wouldn't ha' took the money before, but I did then. 'E give me ten rupees,—enough to pay for a coat twice over, an' we went down to the river to wash our faces, which was well marked. His was special. Then he sez to himself, sputterin' the water out of 'is mouth, 'I wonder if I done right,' 'e sez. 'Yes, sir,' sez I. 'There's no fear about that.' 'It's all well for you,' 'e sez, 'but what about the comp'ny?' 'Beggin' your pardon, sir,' I sez, 'I don't think the comp'ny will give no trouble.' Then we went shootin', an' when we come back I was feelin' as chirpy as a cricket, an' I took an' rolled Samuelson up an' down the verandah, an' give out to the comp'ny that the difficulty between me an' Lieutenant Ouless was satisfactory put a stop to. I told Jock, o' course, an' Terence. Jock didn't say nothing, but Terence 'e sez: 'You're a pair, you two. An', begad, I don't know which was the better man.' There ain't nothin' wrong with Ouless. 'E's a gentleman all over, an' 'e's come on as much as B. Comp'ny. I lay 'e'd lose 'is commission, tho', if it come out that 'e'd been fightin' with a private. Ho! Ho! fightin' all an afternoon with a bloomin' private like me! What do you think?" he added, brushing the breech of his rifle.

"I think what the umpires said at the sham fight; both sides deserve great credit. But I wish you'd tell me what made you save him in the first place."

"I was pretty sure that 'e 'adn't meant it for me, though that wouldn't ha' made no difference if 'e'd been copped for it. An' 'e was that young too that it wouldn't ha' been fair. Besides, if I had ha' done that I'd ha' missed the fight, and I'd ha' felt bad all my time. Don't you see it that way, sir?"

"It was your right to get him cashiered if you chose," I insisted.

"My right!" Otheris answered with deep scorn. "My right! I ain't a recruity to go whinin' about my rights to this an' my rights to that, just as if I couldn't look after myself. My rights! 'Strewth A'mighty! I'm a man."

The last squad were finishing their shots in a storm of low-voiced chaff. Ouless withdrew to a little distance in order to leave the men at ease, and I saw his face in the full sunlight for a moment, before he hitched up his sword, got his men together, and marched them back to barracks. The boy was proven.

RUDYARD KIPLING.

LEAVES FROM A NOTE-BOOK.

Some people have a peculiar dislike to manuscripts. I do not mean such manuscripts as Editors are mostly familiar with, for in that dislike there might be nothing peculiar; but such as we, or some of us at least, survey with reverent though bounded vision beneath glass cases in the British Museum or in the Forster Gallery at South Kensington, such as are occasionally sold in auction-rooms—the manuscripts of famous novels and poems, the *primæ curæ* of great writers generally. The dislike is certainly not common, to judge by the prices paid for these treasures when they come into the market. Of letters I do not speak. The present age will stick at nothing to gratify its insatiable curiosity about its neighbours' concerns, and the value set upon invitations to dinner, confessions of love or poverty, of mutual admiration or antipathy—

> Poor Diddler's tenth petition for a half-Guinea; Miss Bunyan's for an autograph—

this value, I say, clearly expresses no more than the whim of the moment, like the value set on a certain style of painting or furniture which to-day is and to-morrow gives place to a different style. But for the other class of manuscripts the admiration is genuine, legitimate, and on no account to be derided. It seems to grow; at least the cost grows at which it is willing to be gratified. When the manuscripts of the Waverley Novels were sold in 1831 for the benefit of Constable's creditors—Sir Walter having presented most of them to his publisher on the morning after a merry dinner of the Bannatyne Club—only one, the manuscript of *Rob Roy*, realised so much as £50; *The Antiquary* and *Peveril of the Peak* were bought for £42 apiece, *Old Mortality* for £33, *Guy Mannering* for £27 10*s.*, while no one could be tempted to give more than £12 for the sixty leaves or so of *Ivanhoe*, which are all that remain, if not all that were ever written by the author's hand, of that superb romance. The sale was held late in the season, towards the end of August, when most of those who own long purses are out of London, if not out of England. This may partly account for the small prices; at all events, the thirteen manuscripts sold (of which six were complete) only realised a total of £317, giving the meagre average of less than £25 apiece. Six-and-thirty years later, in 1867, there was another sale in Christie's rooms, when the manuscripts in Cadell's possession were sold on his death. These were mostly manuscripts of the poems, and the prices show a great advance. *The Lady of the Lake* was bought for 264 gs., *Marmion* for 191 gs. (for an American, it is believed, though Mr. Harvey of St. James' Street, the nominal buyer, has always kept his own counsel on that score), *Rokeby* for 130 gs.; among the prose were *The Tales of a Grandfather*, 145 gs.; *Anne of Geierstein*, 121 gs.; and fragments of *Waverley* and *Ivanhoe* in one volume, 130 gs. Another sale was held in the same rooms in the following year, when *Quentin Durward* was bought for £142, *Woodstock* and *St. Ronan's Well* for £120 each, *The Betrothed* for £77, *The Talisman* for £70, the first and second series of the *Chronicles of the Canongate* (including *The Fair Maid of Perth*, *The Two Drovers*, *The Highland Widow*, and *The Surgeon's Daughter*) for £51, *The Abbot* for £50; while *The Vision of Don Roderick*, which had been sold in the previous year for £37, now changed hands at £57. Of late the prices have risen still higher. In 1889 a single leaf of *The Abbot* was sold for £18 (a price which even the staunchest admirer of Sir Walter will allow to be something

fanciful); and last year the first canto of *The Lay of the Last Minstrel* found a purchaser at upwards of £80. For a long while no part of the original manuscript of this poem was believed to have survived the perils of the printer's office. In a note on the manuscript of *Rokeby* Constable has recorded that "such things were not thought important till the publication of *Marmion*." Not long ago an obliging bookseller showed me the manuscript of *The Fair Maid of Perth*, and the other tales that make up the two series of the *Chronicles of the Canongate*, and told me that for £200 I might call it mine. Not happening to have that sum about me, and seeing no immediate prospect of procuring it, I was content to leave it in my friend's possession, especially as he allowed me to examine it as closely and for so long a time as I pleased; and in his possession it remains, for aught I know, to this day.

Lamb has somewhere expressed his dislike to seeing great works in manuscript; though I cannot remember where, nor the particular grounds of his dislike. Among my friends is one who shares Lamb's antipathy. He objects to the dirty and dishevelled condition in which its passage through the printer's hands generally leaves a manuscript. No doubt the printer's thumb, like the blacksmith's brow, is often "wet with honest sweat" and with ink, a combination apt to leave traces on the paper not designed by the author; moreover strange marks, and hieroglyphs of more than cuniform perplexity to all but the printer's eyes, are scrawled over the pages. Let it be granted that these do not improve its appearance. Yet if the manuscript be considered worth preservation, they can always be in some measure removed. For my own part I confess to a great fondness for examining these sacred relics. Would that I could flatter myself this were the only point whereon I differed from Elia! Among the treasures so profusely heaped in the long galleries at South Kensington, nothing, to my fancy, is comparable to the manuscripts of Charles Dickens' novels—those priceless sheets whereon may be traced fresh from the master-mind the inimitable fancies that have lightened the heavy and the weary weight of human kind for so many years. It is true that a cruel, albeit necessary, precaution compels me to survey these treasures through a glass darkly. A solitary page of each of these precious volumes is all that has ever been vouchsafed to me. So many times have I hung over this envious glass that every turn of the pen, every change of the thought, on these pages are familiar to me, from the free, bold hand of *Oliver Twist* or *Barnaby Rudge* —written in the days

> ———When wits were fresh and clear
> And Life ran gaily as the sparkling Thames—

down to the blue filagree-work—handwriting it scarcely seems—of *Edwin Drood*, wrought painfully out in that last hour

> When prayers, and gifts, and tears are fruitless all,
> And the night waxes, and the shadows fall.

I fare better at the British Museum, where a gracious librarian has given me access to the Manuscript Room, and at my bidding the locked cases yield up treasures yet more precious to me than those of South Kensington,—though I may hardly, I fear, call myself student in the sense imagined by the composer of that placard barring the way for the unstudious herd to this paradise of autographs, this presence-chamber, as it were, of the illustrious dead. For there we may learn how the spells were woven of a yet mightier magician than Charles Dickens. There one may see how the pen of Walter Scott like Homer's coursers "devoured up the ground," as day by day, as time could be snatched amid the innumerable distractions of that crowded life, the tale of Amy Robsart flowed from that wondrous brain. There one may

look upon the great sprawling schoolboy's hand, legible enough then, but soon to grow into very Sanscrit, in which Byron wrote the notes for the fair copy made of the first two cantos of *Childe Harold* by Robert Dallas' son. There one may read the rough draft of that "pretty poem which must not be called Homer," as it was jotted down on the backs of letters and envelopes by "paper-sparing" Pope. There one may decipher from Macaulay's chaotic scrawl how Spencer Cowper, despite a stupid judge and a malignant prosecution, was acquitted of the death of the fair Quaker who drowned herself for love of him, of the fatal duel between Beau Seymour and Kirke of the Blues, of Captain Kidd and the Adventure Galley, of the viperous tongue of Howe and the calm integrity of Somers.

It is of course essential that the manuscript, whether prose or verse, notes or text, should be the original draft, the genuine *prima cura*. A fair copy made for the printer is naught. For this reason the manuscripts of George Eliot's novels, that have lately been deposited among these sacred archives, leave me cold; her works, indeed, in any shape, have never made me warm. With perfect equanimity I can turn over these smooth, clean pages (of the size and quality known, I believe, as sermon-paper) where the fine steel pen has moved with ordered pace along the ruled lines. Some parts of the two manuscripts I looked through (*Adam Bede* and *Romola*) remain as they were first written, but there seems little difference between them and the revised parts. One can hardly imagine, probably even her admirers do not imagine, George Eliot as ever rapt, caught up, hurried along in the full torrent of inspiration. Sir Francis Doyle was fond of quoting a passage from Pindar to show how (in his rather free paraphrase)

That word all deeds shall over-live,
That word to which the Graces give
Their charm with happy chance combined,
Just as, through spirit-depths out-flung,
It rushes to the poet's tongue
Forth from the poet's mind.

There was little rushing, one fancies, about George Eliot's words. One thinks of her composing as Gibbon composed, constructing each sentence carefully in her mind before putting it on paper. The most remarkable thing to me about these trim little volumes, in their neat morocco binding, was, I will confess it, the dedications. *Romola* is thus inscribed: "*To the husband* whose perfect Love has been the best source of her insight and strength this manuscript is given *by his devoted wife* the writer." *Adam Bede* is also dedicated to "*my dear husband*, George Henry Lewes, &c., &c." The italics are my own. And yet they say the writer of this amazing travesty of the English language was gifted with the most abundant sense of humour ever vouchsafed to her sex! At least it cannot have been accompanied by a corresponding sense of the ridiculous.

* * * *

From *Kenilworth* to Cumnor is an easy step in our mental pilgrimage. I was in the pretty village one day this summer,—on one of the very few days in this melancholy year when it was possible to realise the existence of summer. And in truth it was a glorious day. We had walked out from Oxford—my companions including, of course, the faithful M., who is always ready to play the Scholar to my Gipsy on those "warm green muffled hills," and without whom I should feel as lonely as their poet felt when Thyrsis had crossed "the unpermitted ferry's flow." And warm indeed were those hills that day! In the Wytham woods there was some shade—and, by Baal, some flies too; a terrible place for flies are those beautiful woods; but the tramp along the water-meadows to Bablockhythe and up that white, blinding, breathless bridle-road, was the hottest I can remember since the Jubilee year. The cool parlour of The Bear was more

than common welcome, nor were its cool tankards forgotten. But mine host has wrought a cruel deed here. The old signboard of the Bear and Ragged Staff, weather-stained enough to have swung over Mike Lambourne's buzzing head, used to bear the venerable name of Giles Gosling, a pretty conceit, for which all true pilgrims were bound to call for an extra cup. It has been taken down now, and replaced by a staring new daub of a showman's bear, a mangy, meek-faced beast, pawing a little sapling. Dick Tinto never wrought a worse caricature! And beneath this unworthy scion of the Bonny Black Bear is written not the familiar old legend of Giles Gosling, but the new legend (albeit familiar too) of Morrell's Entire. It would ill become me to breathe a word against the beer brewed by that worthy firm, who have so often had occasion to bless it on these Berkshire hills; but it tasted no worse under the old sign. Our hostess told us this act of vandalism had been wrought three years ago. It is not meet to contradict a landlady in her own parlour; but that parlour has sheltered me from the heats (and alas, from the rains) of many consecutive summers, and never before have I noticed this wanton piece of restoration. My own impression is that—but there the beast swings, creaks rather, and there is no more to be said.

Some of our company (Oxford men too!) had never seen the inside of Cumnor Church, with its marvellous legend of Tony Forster's many virtues and accomplishments. It was Sunday, and the time of afternoon service; but there was no service till the evening. The keys were kept at the post-office—how much, one wonders, does the post-office at Cumnor contribute to Her Majesty's revenue?—and we had ample leisure to explore the treasures of the pretty old building, which in truth are not numerous. But there was a new one since my last visit, — a stone statue of Elizabeth, flounced and furbelowed, crowned, globed, and sceptred in right royal fashion. It has something of a history, being supposed to have been made by order of Leicester, or Robert Dudley as he was then, to adorn the gardens of Cumnor Place. But it first appears on authentic record at Dean Court in the same parish, where Mary Forster, the last of Tony's kindred, died in 1643. In 1779 it stood somewhere on the slope above Ferry Hincksey. Its next resting-place seems to have been Wytham Abbey, and in an outhouse there it was discovered, sadly broken and defaced, a few years ago by Mr. Griffiths, the present Vicar of Cumnor. By his pious care it has been restored to its pristine splendour, and now stands, a stately if not very graceful figure, in the north aisle of his little church.

But there is a monument here that has more attraction for me than the stone tribute to Queen Bess, or the brazen tribute (brazen maybe in more senses than one) to Tony Fire-the-Faggot. On the southern wall is a tablet recording the birth and death of Norris Hodgson, shipwright and mariner. He was born on June 14, 1714, "in this town" (the good Cumnor folk would have none of your villages!), died on his birthday seven and twenty years later on board H.M.S. *Gloucester* in Anson's squadron, and "was buried in the great South Sea in hope of a joyful resurrection when the sea shall give up her dead." There is something peculiarly grand and impressive about those words, *he was buried in the great South Sea*, an imperial ring in them befitting so imperial a tomb. *And he buried him in a valley in the land of Moab, over against Beth-peor; but no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day.*

* * * *

It is not always that Lord Grimthorpe allows a plain man to agree with him so cordially as it is possible to agree with him in his controversy with Mr. Tallack—*Si rixa est*, as poor Mr. Tallack seems to think, *ubi tu*

pulsas, ego vapulo tantum; and it must be owned that his lordship, as his custom is, has given his adversary rather rough handling, though he has in his turn received severer, because more delicate, castigation from Mr. John Bright, who can write English as well to the purpose as his father could speak it. Mr. Tallack would abolish capital punishment ostensibly on the ground that we can seldom be absolutely certain that we have hanged the right man. Men can only, save in very exceptional cases, be convicted of murder on any but circumstantial evidence, and circumstantial evidence must always leave a possibility of doubt,—for those, Mr. Tallack might have added but did not, who are determined to doubt. Lord Grimthorpe demolishes this argument and shows, perhaps with some unnecessary heat, its real motive. It is only another version of the old outcry against all capital punishment whatever on the score that "hanging a man is the worst use we can put him to." This his lordship quotes as "one of Dickens's silly bits of sentimental cant." Dickens happens not to have written those words, though they are not unlike him. Since Lord Grimthorpe quoted them they have been credited to many people, to Bulwer, to John Wilkes, to Sir Henry Wotton, and doubtless they will be traced in time to St. Augustine or Tertullian, who appear to be the fathers of most wandering quotations. But whoever first used the words, if for *man* he had written *murderer*, which is the true word, as his lordship pertinently observes, he would never have dared to use them. How the sentence looks then we may learn from Alphonse Karr, who closed an article on Capital Punishment with the following pregnant comment: "Effaçons la peine de mort. Je le veux bien; mais que *MM. les assassins* commencent."

* * * *

Too much has been already written on the subject of Free Education, and I know too little of it, for me to attempt to add anything to the wondrous tale. But when I read, as I read the other day in *The Times*, such a "financial statement" as this following, one may be pardoned, as a humble subject of Her Majesty and a taxpayer (also in a humble way) to Her Majesty's Government, for wondering what manner of return we get for it all. The article in *The Times* was headed *The Last Year of Payment of Results*, and the statement was to this effect:

"The cost of elementary education is growing faster and faster. In 1884 the whole expenditure averaged £1 17*s.* 4¼*d.* a head; last year it was £2 0*s.* 6*d.* a head, averaging in Board schools for all England £2 5*s.* 11½*d.*, and in London £3 2*s.* 7½*d.* The indebtedness of the School Boards of England and Wales is over 18½ millions. The yearly charge on this account alone is £1,114,064, or nearly equal to a rate of 3*d.* in the pound on the rateable value of all the Board school districts put together, whilst the gross outlay of the School Boards (which educate but 39 per cent. of all the children under elementary instruction) last year exceeded six millions."

Surely from such payment there should be some great results!

Early in this year I happened to be passing a few days at the house of a friend, when this question of education cropped up. My host is an inspector of Her Majesty's Schools, and does not, I am sorry to find, think very nobly of the system it is his business to uphold. I asked him a few questions on this score, and for reply he placed a paper in my hand which had arrived that morning in an envelope marked *On Her Majesty's Service.* The paper contained, among much other valuable information, the answers of a pupil-teacher, a girl of sixteen, completing the second year of her apprenticeship, to questions set in a specially prepared subject of study, the geography, to wit, of Europe and British India. I give them as I copied them *verbatim*, with my friend's per-

mission, from the paper in the girl's handwriting.

Q.	*A.*
Where is Colombo	In Spain.
Florence	France.
Munich	Belgium.
Cadiz	Spain.
Delhi	Germany *or* Italy.
Adrianople	Portugal.
Kurrachee	Denmark.

If these answers are in any degree typical of the results of our Educational System (on a teacher, mark, not a pupil), surely the payment should be something less. Even Miss Wirt could have made better play than this, though she did give a smiling answer in the affirmative to Mr. Snob's waggish question whether Dante Algiery was so called because he was born in Algiers.

THE MASTER-ART.

(SUGGESTED BY THE POEM "CROSSING THE BAR.")

THE old-world builder reared his mount of stone
With soaring arch and vaulted vastness blent,
A firmament within the firmament.
The melodist, inweaving tone with tone,
Breathes through the organ's peal his music blown
And through the choir, till the high roof be rent,
And o'er the stars, without impediment,
Dawn some dim vision of the sovran Throne.
Thence we go forth, haply to watch forlorn
Through some drear night, where no pure anthems roll.
Then come, O mightiest master of them all,
Poet, at whose divine deep-breathing call
Night melts to golden glow, and homeward borne
We rest in the Eternal, soul in soul.

ERNEST MYERS.

END OF VOL. LXIV.

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